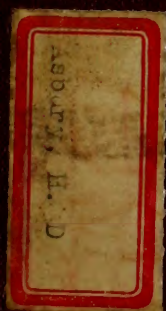


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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE SOCIAL PROGRESS OF THE BOSTON

NEGRO: 1638-1900

by

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(A.B., Clark University, 1936)

submitted in partial fulfilment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

1939

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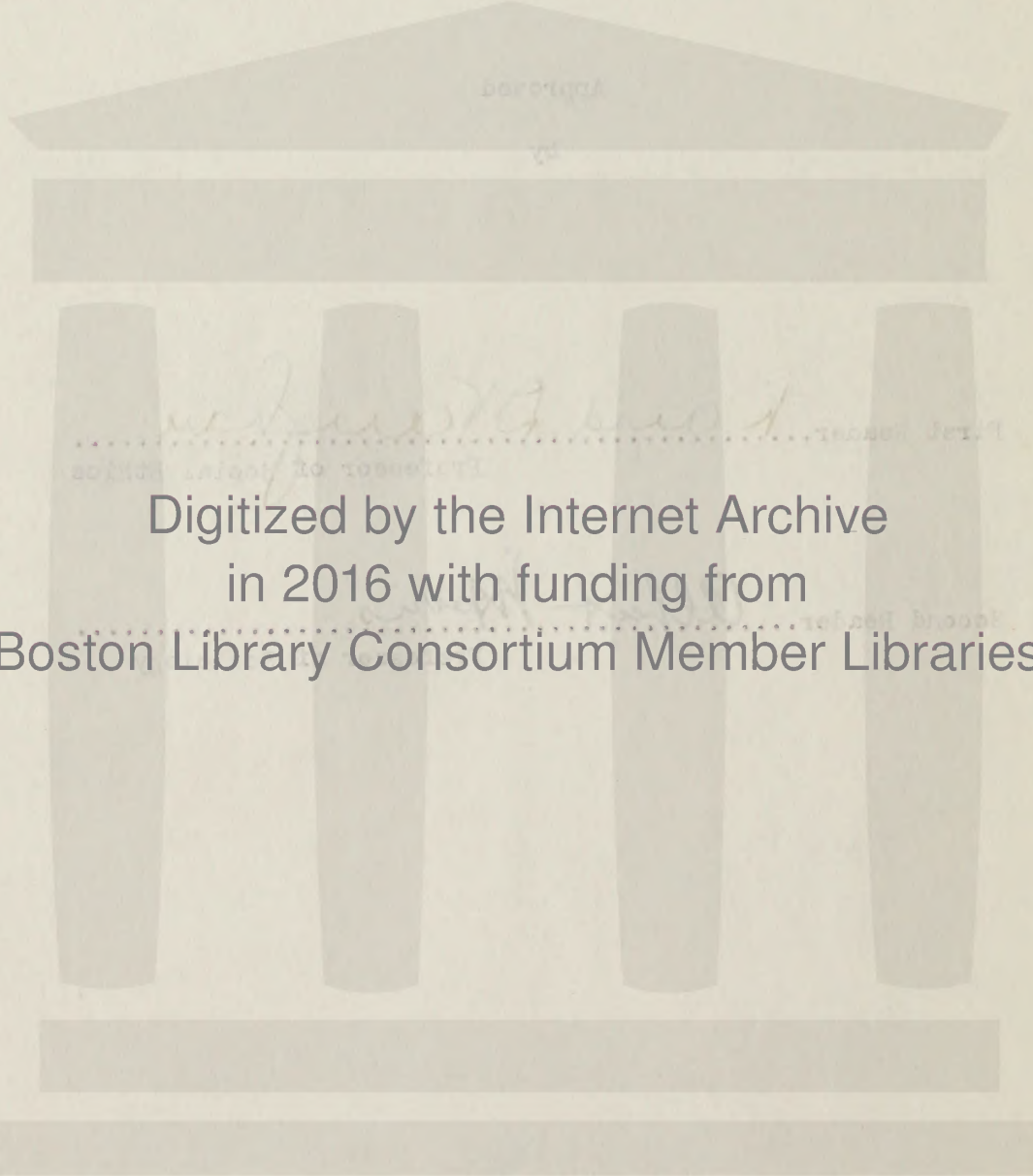
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INTRODUCTION

I. Statement of problem

This study intends to present, aside from the efforts of friends in his behalf, the efforts made by the Boston Negro toward working out his own salvation in his endeavor to rise to the full stature of manhood. These efforts are given fresh treatment in the light of the principles set forth in the progress process and are presented from a distinct point of view, the social.

II. Scope of problem

This study deals primarily with the Boston Negro. The study develops from the year 1638, the date of the first record of Negroes in Boston, to the year 1900.

III. Justification for study

This study is justified when one considers the anomaly in the attitude of native Bostonians and incoming immigrants toward the Negro, which deprives the Negro of political and social equality and even the chance to earn a livelihood. This condition may be helped, if the Negroes can be considered as an unassimilated social group analogous to the different immigrant nationalities, and the people of the city as a whole, including the Negroes, be accustomed to look upon the color line, in many of its aspects, as simply a much more extreme form of the cleavage which separates the different types of immigrant from the natives and from one another. It is hoped that this study may help the citizens of Boston to focalize their traditional devotion to the cause of the Negro in greater degree

upon social conditions that are immediate in time and place.

IV. Method of procedure

This study considers primarily constructive effort rather than disabilities and is divided into five major divisions:

1. The period of attitude formation resulting in definite action toward changing the social status of the Negro.
2. The period of social organization, racial unity, and efforts toward economic stability.
3. The period of the growth of leadership and race consciousness.
4. The period of social attainments and recognition.
5. The rise of reactionary forces which established a philosophy of self-reliance.

The fundamental principles of social progress are emphasized at the beginning of each division and the progress of the Negro in relation to these principles is presented.

Dr. David S. Popenau says, "Attitude is a most vital factor in social progress." An attitude is described as being a process of individual and learned which determines real or possible activity of the individual in the social world. Attitudes have to do with motive, the control of motive, the impulse toward action, the extraneous intellectual forces and concepts that determine specific activities. At the same time, they cause the individual to arrive at decisions and judgments that affect his interests, prejudices, and certainly, as

1. James S. Tully, *American Social Morality*, p. 71.

2. *Lectures in Social Psychology*, 1938-1939, Boston University.

CHAPTER II

Slavery and Trends Toward Emancipation: 1638-1780

1. Attitudes and Social Progress

The gathering and interpretation of social facts is vastly important if progress is to occur, but, says Tufts, "To understand anything of a process or idea it is not sufficient to describe it; so far as possible we must seek to discover the factors that have contributed to make it what it is."¹

In so complex a process as social progress and especially that of a people such as the Negro we obviously cannot name any one or two factors responsible for it. We may, however, take into consideration the factors making for social progress as emphasized by students, and seek to discover how these factors made for and influenced the social progress of the Boston Negro.

Dr. David D. Vaughan says, "Attitude is a most vital factor in social progress."² An attitude is discovered to be a process of individual consciousness which determines real or possible activity of the individual in the social world. Attitudes have to do with motive, the control of motive, the impulse back of action, the extra-intellectual forces and controls that determine specific actions. At any rate, they cause the individual to arrive at decisions and judgments that affect his interests, prejudices, and certainly, as

1. James H. Tufts, America's Social Morality, p. II.

2. Lecture in Social Progress Course, 1938-1939, Boston University

mentioned, his activities.

Joyce O. Hertzler says, "Attitudes play a crucial part in social progress. The wrong attitudes may block progressive measures everywhere, while without the right ones no progress can occur."¹

Due to the inflexibility which they give to the reactions of folks, attitudes are of vital importance in a study such as this. The importance of the attitude lies not in its goodness or badness, but in the effect which it has upon our recognition of facts and the bearing of facts.

"In the last analysis," says Hertzler, "it would seem that progress both personal and social, is a matter of changes in attitudes. The minds of men take a new orientation which gives a different coloring to life; the structure and conventions of their lives change, and later, comes the visible change of social structure."²

2. Concept of Social Progress for this Study

The concept of social progress has a different significance for different religious sects, for different individuals, for different times, and for different social groups. The member of a civilized society may claim that civilized life is a better life than that lived by the Eskimo. The Eskimo might deny this for if the life of the man in a civilized society better satisfies his ideals, so does the Eskimo's life his. Mac Iver says,

"Premising that human beings are fundamentally alike, have the same organic natures, the same initial appetites, the same germinal capacities varying in degree of potency or of evocation, we may seek for a common content of progress by setting down those goods or forms of satisfaction which all men seek in the degree of their opportunity. If we examine the actual conduct of men - and all conduct is practical valuation - do we not find a large agreement concerning the things they both desire and find desirable? Can we not place in this list of goods, health, length of life

1. Joyce O. Hertzler, Social Progress, 105.

2. Ibid, 106.

(given health), assurance of the means of living, sustaining social companionship, the respect of one's fellows, and some degree or kind of power and prestige? And can we not then say that social progress means such change in the conditions of a society that these are provided in greater measure for its members?"¹

"The concept of the desirable", says Mac Iver, "and its comparative, that of progress, is never absent from human affairs. All conduct implies a consciousness of welfare, of less and greater welfare - we could neither live nor act without it. To live is to act, and to act is to choose, and to choose is to evaluate."²

Progress is thus rooted in our practical life and in our conscious needs. It is a cause of change and is always relative to the conditions we want changed. It contains the sense of a present imperfection, an inadequacy which men seek to remove, only to find another inadequacy beyond it. It is one form of the quest for fulfillment, for all that makes complete self-realization possible, which all life seeks in its degree.

Inasmuch as the Negro within the Boston Colony sought a change in the condition of society which prevented complete self-realization and prompted by a consciousness of welfare acted to bring about a society which would provide all of those desires which Mac Iver says meets with a common agreement among men as being desirable, his actions can be considered in the light of social progress.

3. Period of Attitude Formation

The Puritans had founded the town of Boston in 1630 in devotion to the cause of liberty and spiritual freedom, yet they did not refrain from placing the Negro in a state of bondage which deprived him of the harmonious exercise of human faculties and powers. Thus there arose, simultaneously with the Negro's advent in 1638, a contradiction between the abstract profession of the white citizens of Boston and their concrete treatment of this race. This contradiction was speedily to give trouble

1. R. M. Mac Iver, Society: Its Structure and Changes, P. 415

2. Ibid, P. 417.

to the Puritan conscience and result in an attitude of disfavor toward the state of bondage in which the Negro was placed.

Premising that human beings are fundamentally alike and that the concept of the desirable is never absent from human affairs and that all conduct implies a consciousness of welfare from which men can neither live nor act it can be assumed that within the Boston Negro was the desire to achieve and enjoy relative fullness of life and to possess all of the faculties that make complete self-realization possible. The natural reaction to slavery would result in an attitude of restlessness and dissatisfaction with the state of bondage in which he was placed, in which not only was the negation of spiritual freedom implicit, but which took away physical freedom as well.

Since an attitude can be considered, according to Mac Iver, "as a definite state or quality of consciousness, involving a tendency to act in a characteristic way whenever an object or occasion which stimulates it is presented,"¹ the attitude which disturbed the Puritan conscience brought on by the presence of the Negro slave and the attitude of the Negro toward a society which denied him the ordinary fulfillment of life started action which was to result as will be seen in changing the Negro's social status.

1. R. M. Mac Iver, Society: Its Structure and Changes, P. 44.

3. Establishing of Slavery and its Reaction

In Massachusetts, as in the other colonies, slavery made its way into individual families first; thence into communities, where it was clothed with the garments of usage and custom; and, finally, men longing to enjoy the fruit of unrequited labor gave it the sanction of statutory law. There was not so great a demand for slaves in Massachusetts as in the Southern States and yet they had their uses in a domestic way, and were consequently sought after. As early as 1641 Massachusetts adopted a body of fundamental laws. The magistrates, armed with authority from the crown of Great Britain, had long exercised a power which wellnigh infringed upon the personal rights of the people. The latter desired a revision of the laws, and such modification of the power and discretion of the magistrates as would be in sympathy with the spirit of personal liberty that perverted the minds of the colonists. But while the people sought to wrest an arbitrary power from the unwilling hands of their judges, they found no pity in their hearts for the poor Negroes in their midst, who, having served as slaves because of their numerical weakness and the passive silence of justice, were now to become the legal and statutory vassals--for their lifetime--of a liberty-loving and a liberty-seeking people!¹

1. C. W. Elliott, New England History, Vol. II, pp. 168-205

A. The "Body of Liberties."

In the famous "Body of Liberties," is to be found the first statute establishing slavery in the United States. It is as follows:

"It is ordered by this court, and the authority thereof; that there shall never be any bond slavery, villainage or captivity amongst us, unless it be lawful captives taken in just wars, as willingly sell themselves or are sold to us, and such shall have the liberties and Christian usage which the law of God established in Israel concerning such persons doth morally require; provided this exempts none from servitude, who shall be judged thereto by authority." ¹

"There has been considerable discussion about the real bearing of this statute. Many zealous historians, in discussing it, have betrayed more zeal for the good name of the Commonwealth than for the truth of history. Some of them have maintained, with a greater show of learning than of facts, that this statute abolished slavery in Massachusetts. But, on the other hand, there are countless lawyers who pronounce it a plain and unmistakable law, 'creating and establishing slavery.'" ²

"In all the proceedings of the General Court on this occasion, there is not a trace of anti-slavery opinion or sentiment, still less of anti-slavery legislation; though both have been claimed for the honor of the colony." ³

4. Opposition to Slavery by Colonists

Hardly had slavery got a foothold, in Massachusetts, before opposition to it, on humanitarian grounds, began. In 1668 Governor Andros received instruction from the crown requiring him to have a law passed restraining brutality on the part of masters and overseers, and making wilful killing of slaves punishable by death. ⁴ As early as 1701, citizens of Boston had appealed to their representatives in the legislature, "to put a period to Negroes being slaves," and to encourage the

1. Ancient Charters and Laws of Mass., pp. 52, 23.

2. Geo. W. Williams, History of the Negro Race in America, p. 177

3. Geo. H. Moore, Slavery in Mass., p. 30.

4. Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the Mass. Bureau of Statistics of Labor, p. 220.

1

bringing in of white servants. The same sentiment was further evidenced by persistent efforts to stop the rating of Negroes as live stock for purpose of taxation. About 1712, Judge Samuel Sewall, the leader of the anti-slavery agitation of that period, wrote a tract entitled "The Selling of Joseph", which greatly furthered the movement toward manumission.

Judge Sewall in his tract dealt slavery a severe blow, and opened up an agitation on the subject that was felt during the entire revolutionary struggle. He became the great apostle of liberty, the father of the anti-slavery movement in the colony. He was the bold and stern John the Baptist of that period, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" of bondage, to prepare the way for freedom.

The Quakers, or Friends as they were called, were perhaps the earliest friends of the slaves, but, like Joseph of Arimathaea, were "secretly" so, for fear of the Puritans.

The Negroes of Boston were not mere passive observers of the benevolent conduct of their white friends. They were actively interested in the agitation going on in their behalf. Here, as in no other colony, the Negroes showed themselves equal to the emergencies that arose, and capable of appreciating the opportunities to strike for their own rights, as will be shown in the following pages.

1. Mass. Hist. Coll., Second Series, VIII, p. 184.

5. The Ordinary Life and Social Intercourse of the Negro

If now we turn aside from laws and statutes and consider the ordinary life and social intercourse of the Negro, we shall find more than one contradiction, for in the colonial era codes affecting slaves and free Negroes had to grope their way to uniformity. "The status of the Negro during this era", says Brawley, "was complicated by the incidents of the system of servitude and in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, special discrimination against him on account of race was given formal recognition."¹

A great many of the Negroes in the Boston colony had only recently been imported from Africa, and they were especially baffling to their masters, of course, when they conversed in their native tongues. At first only men were brought, but soon women came also, and the treatment accorded these people varied all the way from occasioned indulgence to utmost cruelty. The hours of work regularly extended from sunrise to sunset and house-servants would go about only partially clad, and the slave might be marked or branded like one of the lower animals; he was not thought to have a soul, and the law sought to deprive him of all human attributes. For those who were criminal offenders simple execution was not always considered severe enough. In Massachusetts hanging was the worst legal penalty, but the obsolete common-law punishment was revived in 1755 to burn alive a slave-woman who had killed her

1. Benj. Brawley, A. Soc. Hist. of the Am. Negro, p. 32.

1

master in Cambridge.

As to the political rights of the Negro, it should be borne in mind, that, as he was excluded from the right of Christian baptism, hence from the church; and as only church-members enjoyed the rights of freemen, it is clear that the Negro was not admitted to the exercise of the duties of a freeman. Admitting that there were instances where Negroes received the rite of baptism, it was so well understood as not entitling them to freedom or political rights, that it was never questioned during this entire period. Free Negroes were but little better off than the slaves. While they might be regarded as owning their own labor, political rights and ecclesiastical privileges were withheld from them. They became the objects of a suspicious legislation, which deprived them of most of the rights of freemen, and reduced them to a social position very similar, in many respects, to that which inveterate prejudice in many parts of Europe has fixed upon the Jews.

A. The "free persons of color"

The fact that there were free Negroes--or, as they were styled to distinguish them from the slaves, "free persons of color"--in the community, helped to undermine slavery. As has been mentioned, some Negroes were bound as slaves for a term of years only. Others gained their freedom through exceptional industry or the exhibition of superior qualities. Not a few were set at liberty in return for military service. Some escaped, and, thanks in large part to a public sentiment inclined to be sympathetic, contrived to evade capture and return. Practically

1. Edward Eggleston: Social Conditions in the Colonies, in Century Magazine, Oct. 1884, p. 863.

from the beginning, moreover, a considerable proportion of slaves were manumitted by more than ordinarily kind-hearted masters. In 1708, according to the town officials' lists, there were thirty-three free Negroes in Boston.

"The relations between the free Negro and the slave might well have given cause for concern. Above what was, after all, only an artificial barrier spoke the call of race and frequently of kindred. Sometimes at a later date jealousy arose when a master employed a free Negro to work with his slaves, the one receiving pay and the others laboring without compensation. In general, however, the two groups worked like brothers, each giving the other the benefit of any temporary advantage that it possessed. Sometimes the free Negro could serve by reason of the greater freedom of movement that he had, and if no one would employ him, or if, as frequently happened, he was browbeaten and cheated out of the reward of his labor, the slave might somehow see that he got something to eat. When some prosperous Negroes found themselves able to do so, they occasionally purchased Negroes, who might be their own children or brothers, in order to give them that protection without which on account of recent manumission they might be required to leave the colony in which they were born. Thus, whatever the motive, the tie that bound the free Negro and the slave was a strong one; and in spite of the fact that Negroes who owned slaves were generally known as hard masters, as soon as any men of the race began to be really prominent their best endeavor was devoted to the advancement of their people."¹ The presence of this class prevented slavery from coming to be accepted either by the Negroes or the whites as a foreordained and necessary institution.

In a state of society in which the relation of master and slave was the rule, there was of course little place for either the free Negro or the poor white man. When the pressure became too great the poor white man moved away; the free Negro, finding himself everywhere buffeted, in the colonial era at least, had little choice but to work out his salvation in Boston as well as he could.

1. Benj. Brawley, Soc. Hist. of Am. Negro, pp. 33, 34.

6. The Opposition of the Negro to his

Social Status

The Negroes in the colony at length struck a blow for their liberty which was the sober, sensible effort of men and women who believed their condition abnormal, and slavery prejudicial to the largest growth of the human intellect.

"The impassioned appeals of Sewall had rallied the languishing energies of the Negroes, and charged their hearts with the divine passion for liberty. They had learned to spell out the letters of freedom, and the meaning of the word had quite ravished their fainting souls. They had heard that the royal charter declared all the colonists British subjects; they had devoured the arguments of their white friends and were now prepared to act on their own behalf. The slaves of Greece and Rome, it is true, petitioned the authorities for a relaxation of the severe laws that crushed their manhood; but they were captives from other nations, noted for government and a knowledge of the science of warfare. But it was left to the Negroes of Massachusetts to force their way into courts created only for white men, and win their cause!"¹

A. "Suing for Liberty", 1766

On Wednesday, November 5, 1766, John Adams made the following record in his diary:-

"5. Wednesday. Attended Court; heard the trial of an action of trespass, brought by a mulatto woman, for damages, for restraining her of her liberty. This is called suing for liberty; the first action that ever I knew of the sort, though I have heard there have been many."²

So as early as 1766 Mr. Adams records a case of "suing for liberty"; and though it was the first he had known of, nevertheless, he had "heard there have been many". The case to which Mr. Adams makes reference is important since it is the earliest case mentioned anywhere in the records of the colony.

1. Geo. W. Williams, Hist. of Negro in Am. pp. 227, 228.
2. Charles F. Adams, Works of John Adams, Vol. II, P. 200

6. The Opposition of the Negroes to the

Social Status

The Negroes in the colony at length struck a blow for their liberty which was the most notable effort of men and women who believed their condition abominable, and slavery prejudicial to the largest growth of the human intellect.

"The impassioned appeals of Banti and rallied the leading energies of the Negroes, and charged their hearts with the divine passion for liberty. They had learned to spell out the letters of freedom, and the meaning of the word had quite reversed their former social. They had heard that the royal charter declared all the colonists British subjects; they had repeated the arguments of their white friends and were now prepared to act on their own behalf. The slaves of Greece and Rome, it is true, petitioned the authorities for a relaxation of the severe laws that cramped their freedom; but they were excluded from other nations, hated for government and a knowledge of the science of warfare. But it was left to the Negroes of Massachusetts to force their way into courts created only for white men, and win their freedom."

A. "Selling for Liberty", 1783

On Wednesday, November 5, 1783, John Adams made the following

record in his diary:-

"5. Wednesday. Attended Court; heard the trial of an action of trespass, brought by a white woman, for damages, for restraining her of her liberty. This is called selling for liberty; the first action that ever I knew of her sort, though I have heard there have been many."

So as early as 1783 Mr. Adams records a case of "selling for liberty";

and though it was the first he had known of, nevertheless, he had "heard there have been many". The case to which Mr. Adams refers is now so important since it is the earliest case mentioned anywhere in

the records of the colony.

1. See W. Williams, Life of John Adams, Vol. II, p. 235.
2. Charles F. Adams, Works of John Adams, Vol. II, p. 200.

B. Case of Newport vs. Billing, 1768.

The next of the "freedom cases", in chronological order, was the case of Newport vs. Billing, and was doubtless the one in which John Adams was engaged in the latter part of September, 1768. It was begun in the Inferior Court, where the decision was against the slave, Amos Newport. The plaintiff took an appeal to the highest court in the colony; and that court gave as its solemn opinion, "that the said Amos Newport was not a freeman, as he alleged, but the proper slave of the said Joseph Billing". It should not be lost sight of, that not only the Fundamental laws of 1641, but the highest court in Massachusetts, held, as late as 1768, that there was property in man.

C. Case of James vs. Lechmere, 1769.

In 1769, James, a slave of Richard Lechmere brought an action against his master for detaining him in bondage. Richard Lechmere resided in Cambridge, and held to servitude for life a Negro named "James". On the 2nd of May, 1769, this slave began an action in the Inferior Court of Common Pleas. The action was "in trespass for assault and battery, and imprisoning and holding the plaintiff in servitude from April 11, 1758, to the date of the writ." The judgment of the Inferior Court was adverse to the slave; but on the 31st of October, 1769, the Superior Court of Suffolk had the case settled by compromise. This case has been cited as having settled the question of bond servitude in Massachusetts.

1. Charles F. Adams, Works of John Adams, Vol. II, p. 213.

D. Suit of Swain against Folger, 1770.

In 1770 John Swain of Nantucket brought suit against Elisha Folger, captain of the vessel "Friendship", for allowing a Mr. Roth to receive on board his ship a Negro boy named "Boston", and for the recovery of the slave. This was a jury-trial in the Court of Common Pleas. The jury brought in a verdict in favor of the slave, and he was "manumitted by the magistrates".

E. Case involving "freedom as right", 1770.

In 1770, in Hanover, Plymouth County, a Negro asked his master to grant him his freedom as his right. The master refused and the Negro, with assistance of counsel, succeeded in obtaining his liberty. From that time on there were many such suits and the majority of them were successful. Counsel was employed through money raised by Negroes in many cases.

F. Slaves petition the Legislature to enact emancipation, 1773, 1774.

A pamphlet containing an account of the famous Sommersett case, which occurred in England in 1772, and in which the court ruled that no one could be held in bondage in that country, was widely and effectively circulated in Massachusetts, as well as in the other North-¹ern colonies. In 1773 and again in 1774 groups of slaves petitioned the legislature to enact emancipation.

On the 25th of June, 1773, a petition was presented to the House of Representatives, and read before that body during the afternoon session. It was the petition

1. Mass. Legislative Report on Free Negroes and Mulattoes, Jan. 17, 1822, P. 13.

1. Bill of Swain against Folger, 1770.

In 1770 John Swain of Newmarket brought suit against Eliza Folger, captain of the vessel "Friendship", for allowing a Mr. Robt. Folger to board his ship a Negro boy named "Foster", and for the recovery of the slave. This was a jury-trial in the Court of Common Pleas. The jury brought in a verdict in favor of the slave, and he was "reinstated by the magistrates".

2. Case involving "Freedom as right", 1770.

In 1770, in Newover, Plymouth County, a Negro asked his master to grant him his freedom as his right. The master refused and the Negro, with assistance of counsel, succeeded in obtaining his liberty. From that time on there were many such suits and the majority of them were successful. Counsel was employed through money raised by Negroes in many cases.

3. Slave petition the Legislature to enact emancipation, 1775, 1776.

A pamphlet containing an account of the famous Somerset case, which occurred in England in 1773, and in which the court ruled that no one could be held in bondage in that country, was widely and effectively circulated in Massachusetts, as well as in the other North-east colonies. In 1775 and again in 1776 groups of slaves petitioned the Legislature to enact emancipation.

In the 25th of June, 1775, a petition was presented to the House of Representatives, and read before that body during the afternoon session. It was the petition

1. Mass. Legislative Report on Free Negroes and Mulattoes, Jan. 17, 1833, p. 125.

"of Felix Holbrook, and others, Negroes, praying that they may be liberated from a state of Bondage, and made Freemen of this Community; and that this Court would give and grant to them some part of the unimproved Lands belonging to the Province, for a settlement, or relieve them in such other Way as shall seem good and wise upon the Whole."¹

After its reading, a motion prevailed to refer it to a select committee for consideration, with leave to report at any time. Three days after the committee was appointed, on the 28th of June, they recommended "that the further Consideration of the Petition be referred till next session".

The slaves did not lose heart, and were ready to urge the Legislature to a consideration of their petition at the next session, in the winter of 1774. The following letter shows that they were anxious and earnest.

"Samuel Adams to John Pickering, Jr.

"Boston, Jan. 8, 1774

"Sir;--

As the General Assembly will undoubtedly meet on the 26th of this month, the Negroes whose petition lies on file, and is referred for consideration, are very solicitous for the Event of it, and having been informed that you intended to consider it at your leisure Hours in the Recess of the Court, they earnestly wish you would compleat a Plan for their Relief. And in the meantime, if it be not too much trouble, they ask it as a favor that you would by a Letter enable me to communicate to them the general outlines of your Design. I am, with sincere regare," etc. ²

It is rather remarkable, that on the afternoon of the first day of the session, Jan. 26, 1774, the "Petition of a number of Negro Men, which was entered on the Journal of the 25th of June last, and referred for Consideration to this session", was read again. The public feeling

1. Massachusetts Legislative Report on Free Negroes and Mulattoes, January 17, 1822, P. 13.
2. Ibid, P. 13.

"of John Holbrook, and others, Negroes, praying that they may be
liberated from a state of bondage, and made freemen of this Commonwealth;
and that this Court would give and grant to them some part of the
unimproved lands belonging to the Province, for a settlement, or
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The slaves did not lose heart, and were ready to urge the
legislature to a consideration of their petition at the next session,
in the winter of 1774. The following letter shows that they were
anxious and earnest.

"General Adams to John Pierpont, Jr.

"Boston, Jan. 8, 1774"

"Sir:--"

As the General Assembly will undoubtedly meet on the 20th of
this month, the Negroes whose petition lies on file, and is referred
for consideration, are very anxious for the report of it, and having
been informed that you intended to consider it at your leisure hours
in the house of the Court, they earnestly wish you would consent
to bring their petition, and in the meantime, it is so near the high
tide of the year, they ask it as a favor that you would by a letter enable us
to communicate to them the general opinion of your design. I am,
which signifies respect, etc. S

It is rather remarkable, that on the afternoon of the first day of
the session, Jan. 20, 1774, the "petition of a number of Negro Men,
which was entered on the Journal of the 25th of June last, and referred
for consideration to this session," was read again. The public feeling

1. Massachusetts Legislative Report on Free Negroes and Minutemen,
January 17, 1822, p. 13.
2. Ibid., p. 13.

on the matter was aroused. It was considered as important, as, if not more important than, any measure before the Legislature.

The committee was out until March, considering what was best to do about the petition. On the 2nd of March, 1774, they reported to the House "a Bill to prevent the Importation of Negroes and others as slaves into this Province".

Like all other measures for the suppression of the slave-trade, this bill failed to become a law.

Slavery got its death-blow, however, from the rights-of-man fervor which inspired the Revolution. Enthusiasm for the principles of equality could scarcely avoid being brought hard up against the paradox of the Negro's status. Augmented by appreciation of the service the Negro rendered in the war, that enthusiasm finally assured the Negro his freedom.

It seems like something more than mere coincidence--like a natural intervolution of kindred issues, indeed--that the Negro's first attainment of freedom was contemporaneous with the colonists' victorious struggle for their own independence; and that in this struggle the Negro took a worthy and in truth a memorable part.¹

7. The Termination of Slavery in Massachusetts

Though an exact date has never been set to mark the termination of slavery in Massachusetts, the approximate time of its disappearance is sufficiently certain.

1. For account of Negroes in Revolutionary War see Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the Mass. Bureau of Statistics of Labor, pp. 227, 228; also Wm. C. Nell, Colored Patriots of the Revolution.

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It seems like something more than mere coincidence--like a natural intervention of kindred issues, indeed--that the Negro's first attainment of freedom was contemporaneous with the colonies' adoption of a strategy for their own independence; and that in this struggle the Negro took a worthy and in fact a memorable part.

V. The Termination of Slavery in Massachusetts

Though an exact date has never been set to mark the termination of slavery in Massachusetts, the approximate date of its disappearance is sufficiently certain.

1. For account of Negroes in Revolutionary War see Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the Mass. Bureau of Statistics of Labor, pp. 225, 226; also Dr. C. Hall, Colored Patriots of the Revolution.

"How, or by what act particularly slavery was abolished in Massachusetts, whether by the adoption of the opinion in Somersett's case, as a declaration and modification of the common law, or by the Declaration of Independence, or by the constitution of 1780, it is not now very easy to determine, and it is rather a matter of curiosity than utility; it being agreed on all hands, that if not abolished before, it was so by the declaration of rights."¹

The declaration of rights here referred to was that drafted by John Adams and adopted by the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention of

1780, the first article of which reads: "All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential and unalienable rights: among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing and protecting property: in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness."

The slave-trade was formally prohibited in 1788, twenty years before similar action was taken by the Federal Government. In 1790 the first national census showed not a single slave in the state. Though several other Northern states had by that time adopted acts of conditional emancipation, in the complete elimination of slavery Massachusetts had attained a unique distinction. This was the first great result wrought by the attitude toward slavery which disturbed the Puritan conscience.

8. The Negro's Social Spirit Yearning to Assert Itself

Until the great chain of slavery was thrown off, little independent social effort could be put forth. As yet there was no racial consciousness, no church, no business organization, yet even in the state of servitude or slavery, the social spirit of the race yearned to assert itself, and such an event as a funeral was attractive

1. Statement by Chief Justice Shaw in 1836; Commonwealth vs. Aves, 18 Pickering, p. 209.

primarily because of the social features that it developed.

A. Formation of Society by Negroes, 1693.

As early as 1693 there is record of the formation of a distinct society by Negroes. In one of his manuscript diaries, preserved in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Cotton Mather¹ in October of this year wrote as follows:

"Besides the other praying and pious meetings which I have been continually serving in our neighborhood, a little after this period a company of poor Negroes, of their own accord, addressed me, for my countenance to a design which they had of erecting such a meeting for the welfare of their miserable nation, that were servants among us. I allowed their design and went one evening and prayed and preached (on Ps. 68.31) with them; and gave them the following orders which I insert duly for the curiosity of the occasion."

The Rules to which Mather here refers are noteworthy as containing not one suggestion of anti-slavery sentiment, and as portraying the altogether abject situation of the Negro at the time he wrote; nevertheless, the text he used was an inspiring one, and in any case the document must have historical importance as the earliest thing that has come down to us in the nature of the constitution or by-laws for a distinctly Negro social organization. It is herewith given entire:

B. Rules for the Society of Negroes, 1693.

Rules for the Society of Negroes.
1693.

We the Miserable Children of Adam, and Noah, thankfully Admiring and Accepting the Free-Grace of GOD, that Offers to Save us from our Miseries, by the Lord Jesus Christ, freely Resolve, with His Help, to become the Servants of that Glorious LORD.

1. See Rules for the Society of Negroes, 1693, by Cotton Mather, reprinted N.Y., 1888, by Geo. H. Moore.

And that we may be Assisted in the Service of our Heavenly Master, we now join together in a SOCIETY, wherein the following RULES are to be observed.

I. It shall be our Endeavor, to Meet in the Evening after the Sabbath; and Pray together by Turns, one to Begin and another to conclude the Meeting; And between the two Prayers, a Psalm shall be sung, and a Sermon Repeated.

II. Our coming to the Meeting, shall never be without the Leave of such as have Power over us: And we will be Careful, that our Meeting may Begin and Conclude between the hours of Seven and Nine; and that we may not be unseasonably Absent from the Families whereto we pertain.

III. As we will, with the help of God, at all Times avoid all Wicked Company, so we will Receive none into our Meeting, but such as have sensibly Reformed their lives from all manner of Wickedness. And, therefore, None shall be Admitted, without the Knowledge and Consent of the Minister of God in this place; unto whom we will also carry every Person, that seeks for Admission among us; to be by Him Examined, Instructed and Exhorted.

IV. We will, as often as may be, Obtain some Wise and Good Man, of the English in the Neighborhood, and especially the Officers of the Church, to look upon us, and by their Presence and Counsel, do what they think fitting for us.

V. If any of our Number fall into the Sin of Drunkenness, or Swearing, or Cursing, or Lying, or Stealing, or Notorious Disobedience or Unfaithfulness unto their Masters, we will Admonish him of his Miscarriage, and Forbid his coming to the Meeting, for at least one Fortnight; and except he then come with great Signs and hopes of his Repentance, we will utterly exclude him, with Blotting his name out of our list.

VI. If any of our Society Defile himself with Fornication, we will give him our admonition; and so, debar him from the Meeting, at least half a Year: Nor shall he Return to it, ever any more, without Exemplary Testimonies of his becoming a New Creature.

VII. We will, as we have Opportunity, set ourselves to do all the Good we can, to the other Negro-Servants in the Town; And if any of them should, at unfit Hours, be abroad much more, if any of them should Run away from their Masters, we will afford them no Shelter: But we will do what in us lies, that they may be discovered, and punished. An if any of us are found Faulty in this they shall be no longer of us.

VIII. None of our Society shall be Absent from our Meeting, without giving a Reason of the Absence; and if it be found, that any have pretended unto their Owners, that they came Unto the Meeting, when they were otherwise and elsewhere Employed, we will faithfully Inform their Owners, and also do what we can to Reclaim such Person from all such Evil Courses for the Future.

IX. It shall be expected from every one in the Society, that he learn the Catechism; and therefore, it shall be one usual exercises, for one of us to ask the Questions, and for all the rest in their Order to say the Answers in the Catechism; Either, The New English Catechism or the Assemblies Catechism, or the Catechism in the Negro Christianized.

9. Period One of only Slightest Measure of Social Progress.

In the era of the Revolution began that racial consciousness on which almost all later effort for social betterment has been based. By 1700 the only cooperative effort on the part of the Negro was such as that in the isolated society to which Cotton Mather gave rules. As yet there was no genuine basis of racial self-respect. In one way or another, however, in the eighteenth century the idea of association developed, and especially in Boston about the time of the Revolution Negroes began definitely to work together: -

"Thus they assisted individuals in test cases in the courts, and when John Swan in his *Dissuasion from the Slave Trade* made such a statement as that 'no country can be called free where there is one slave', it was at the earnest desire of the Negroes in Boston that the revised edition of the pamphlet was published."¹

It is evident from cited events and from the legislation of the era that there was little genuine effort for the improvement of the social condition of the Negro people in the colony. Toward amicable relations with the other racial elements only the slightest measure of social progress was made.

1. John Swan, Dissuasion from the Slave Trade, P. 9.

CHAPTER III

Suppression of Freedom and Trends Toward Social Security: 1780-1830

I. The Rate of Progress

A. Progress a Step-by-Step Process

Dr. David D. Vaughan says, "Human progress moves not as an arrow¹ flies, but as a man walks." Progress must be a step-by-step process, the result of consecutive and concurrent action of countless causes. Each step in advance develops out of preceding stages. Each one is a matter of fractional improvements, temporary makeshifts, compromises, and careful applications of various principles. "Progress", says Hertzler, "is mainly a matter of habit construction and attitude formation. It comes chiefly from the breaking down of former methods of social adjustment and the building up of new ones--a devious and often a roundabout process. It should come, in the main, through a successful flank movement, instead of a brave but suicidal frontal attack. Weaknesses and wrongs and errors cannot be removed at once, since they may be as much a part of the social structure as the favorable or desirable elements. In any reform, growth and organic adaption must be taken into account. If the reformer is too precipitate, he strains the social tissue. He must often be content with half-reforms. There must be adequate time for readjustment if the

1. Lecture in Social Progress Course, 1938-1939, Boston University.
2. Joyce O. Hertzler, Social Progress, pp. 113, 114.

improvement is to be permanent. Progress should be a slow, gradual¹ process, guided by the products of knowledge and experience."

2. The "Dark Ages" of Negro History

The five decades between 1780 and 1830--constitute what might be considered the "Dark Ages" of Negro history; and yet, as with most "Dark Ages", at even a glance below the surface, these years will be found to be throbbing with life, and we will discover that in them the Boston Negro was doing what he could, on his own account, slowly but patiently, to move forward.

3. Social and Economic Status at this Period

At this period the social and economic status of the Boston Negro is suggested by a most interesting section of the census of 1790, This section consisted of a complete list of heads of families, with their names and the number of persons in their households.

A. Passing of slavery had not produced any sweeping change in social status.

The fact that the majority of the 766 Negroes in Boston were not entered independently by name, but simply as "Negroes" attached to the respective white households, implies that the passing of slavery had not produced any sweeping change in the local social, economic and industrial position of the race. The very names which many of the race bear, as shown by the heads of families section of the 1790 census

1. Joyce O. Hertzler, Social Progress, PP. 113, 114.

are suggestive of the Negro's status. "Crum" Barnes, "Cuff" Bennett, and "Sambo" Jackson are not appellations which conjure up individuals of any great degree of dignity and respect. In fact the Negro's position at that time, generally speaking, appears to have been not far above the level of such names. It was a position too inferior to carry a suggestion of any sort of equality with the whites. For this very reason, the Negro was not the object of the kind of animosity on the part of the whites which in later years the suggestion of equality aroused. Rather, he was looked upon as belonging to a lower order, and as being the ordained serving-man of the community. As such he was treated for the most part with condescending good humor, but he was also made the butt of jest and sport, and sometimes the victim of brutal outbursts.

B. The "Charge to the African Lodge" by Prince Hall

Testimony to both the ill usage the Negro suffered, and the way he himself felt regarding the treatment meted out to him, is afforded by an extract from a "Charge to the African Lodge which Prince Hall, to whom reference will be given later, delivered to his fellow-Masons in 1797, and which was subsequently published in pamphlet form. The extract in point is as follows:-

"Now, my brethren, as we see and experience, that all things here are frail and changeable and nothing here to be depended upon: Let us seek those things which are above, and at the same time let us pray to almighty God, while we remain in the tabernacle, that he would give us the grace of patience and strength to bear up under all our troubles, which at this day, God knows, we have our share. Patience, I say, for were we not possessed of a great measure of it, you could not bear up under the daily insults you meet with in the streets of Boston; much more on public days of recreation, how are you shamefully abused, and

that at such a degree, that you may truly be said to carry your lives in your hands; and the arrows of death are flying about your heads; helpless old women have their clothes torn off their backs, even to the exposing of their nakedness....My brethren, let us not be cast down under these and many other abuses we at present labour under: for the darkest is before the break of day."

Absence of bitterness, enduring patience, simple religious faith, and persistent hopefulness were the qualities evinced in this exhortation. These qualities had in fact characterized the Negro from the beginning in his reaction to the adversities of his lot.

4. Attempts to Suppress Freedom of Negroes

From time to time various attempts had been made to stop the immigration of Negroes to Boston and even to get rid of those already here, on the ground that poverty, disease, and crime were rife among them.

A. Legislative Laws of Suppression, 1788.

In 1788, during the same session of the Legislature which adopted the act prohibiting the slave-trade, a law was passed for the suppression and punishment of "rogues, vagabonds, common beggars, and other idle, disorderly, and lewd persons." By Section V of this law it was provided, "that no person being an African or Negro, other than a subject of the Emperor of Morocco, or a citizen of someone of the United States (to be evidenced by a certificate from the Secretary of the State of which he is a citizen), shall tarry within this Commonwealth for a longer time than two months." ¹ And in the "Massachusetts Mercury" of September 16, 1800, appeared the following:-

1. Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the Mass. Bureau of Statistics of Labor, P. 223.

that at such a distance, and you may truly be said to carry your lives in your hands; and the wrong of death and living about your heads; besides all women have their children torn off their breasts, even to the extent of their weakness.... My brethren, let us not be cast down under these and many other wrongs we as present labour under: for the darkest is before the dawn of day."

Speakers of Abolition, including Garrison, simple religious men,

and persistent abolitionists with the qualities named in this exposition.

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History of September 15, 1800, appeared the following:-

1. Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the State Bureau of Investigation of Labor, p. 222.

"Notice to Blacks":-

"The officers of police having made return to the subscriber of the names of the following persons, who are Africans or Negroes, not subjects of the Emperor of Morocco nor citizens of the United States, the same are hereby warned and directed to deport out of this Commonwealth before the 10th day of October next, as they would avoid the pain and penalties of the law in that case provided, which was passed by the Legislature March 26th, 1788. Charles Bullfinch, Superintendent, by order and direction of the selectmen."

This and other similar efforts to get rid of the Negroes by a policy of intimidation failed of their object, however, because they did not after all represent the final decision of the community. The more deliberate attitude received expression in the report in 1822 of a legislative committee appointed the year before to draft a bill restricting the admission of free Negroes into the state. In submitting that report the Chairman of the committee first admitted that no doubt the severe "Black Laws" of most of the other Northern states were driving Negroes into Massachusetts, where they received comparatively humane treatment; that his colleagues and himself could not but be alarmed by "the increase of a species of population, which threatened to become both injurious and burdensome", that

"the black convicts in the State Prison, on the first of January, 1821, formed $146\frac{1}{2}$ part of the black population of the State, while the white convicts, at the same time, formed but 2140^{th} part of the white population"; and that "it is believed a similar proportion will be found to exist in all public establishments of this State, as well as Prisons as Poor-Houses."¹

1. Massachusetts Legislative Report on Free Negroes and Mulattoes, January 16, 1822, P. 1.

"Notice to Blacks":

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This and other similar efforts to get rid of the Negroes by a policy of intimidation failed of their object, however, because they did not offer all the support and final decision of the community. The more deliberate attitude received expression in the report in 1832 of a legislative committee appointed a year before to draft a bill restricting the admission of free Negroes into the state. In this report the Chairman of the committee first stated that he looked for severe "Black Laws" of most of the other Northern states were driving Negroes into Massachusetts, where they received comparatively humane treatment; that his colleagues and himself would not be alarmed by "the increase of a species of population, which threatened to become both injurious and pernicious," that

"The black community in the State of Massachusetts, on the 1st of January, 1832, formed 140,000 part of the black population of the State, while the white community, at the same time, formed but 210,000 part of the white population; and that 'it is believed a similar proportion will be found to exist in all public establishments of this State, as well as in the private as in the public houses.'"

J. Massachusetts Legislative Report on Free Negroes and Mulattoes, January 18, 1832, p. 1.

Nevertheless, he stated, his committee had been unable to report the repressive measure requested. Referring to the law of 1788, he said:-

This law has never been enforced, and ineffectual as it has proved, they (his committee) would never have been the authors of placing among the Statutes a law so arbitrary in its principles, and in its operation so little accordant with the institutions, feelings, and practices of the people of the Commonwealth. The history of that law has well convinced the Committee that no measure (which they could devise) would be attended with the smallest good consequence. That it would have been a matter of satisfaction and congratulation to the Committee if they had succeeded in framing a law which....should have promised to check and finally to overcome an evil upon which they have never been able to look with unconcern. But a law which should produce that effect would entirely depart from that love of humanity, that respect for hospitality and for the just rights of all classes of men, in the constant and successful exercise of which the inhabitants of Massachusetts have been singularly conspicuous.

That is,--the whites did not like the Negro, they looked upon him as an objectionable element in the community, and they would have been glad to be rid of him. But they could not bring themselves to the point of open and avowed persecution. There was the same old contradiction between principles and practice. There was the same troubling of the Puritan conscience. Conscience again prevailed, with the result,

1. Legislative Report on Free Negroes and Mulattoes, January 16, 1822,
P. 3.

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 diction between principles and practice. There was the same prevailing
 of the better conscience. Conscience again prevailed, with the result
 of the legislative report on the Negroes and Whites, January 10, 1882,
 p. 3.

this time, that Massachusetts left her door open to Negroes seeking refuge from oppression in other states.

5. Beginnings of Industrial, Economic, and Social Progress

That the Negro was beginning to make industrial, economic and social progress, however, is also plain.

A. Negroes designated as "laborers" and "tradesmen"

Of the 224 Negroes listed in the directory of 1829, 54 were designated as "laborers". These were doubtless street laborers, caretakers of buildings and estates, and the like. The number of waiters, bootblacks, cooks, window-cleaners, sweeps, wood-sawers, coachmen, and unspecified "servants", was 30; that of laundresses, 8. There were 36 sailors. The trades were represented by a cordwainer, a housewright, a grain-measurer, a soap-maker, a hair-renovator, and a boot-maker.

B. Business Proprietors

The Negroes had almost a monopoly of the barbering business. The directory gave the names of 32 "hairdressers", most of whom were owners of shops, situated in every part of the city. There were 2 handcart men, 14 clothes shops, most of them on Brattle Street in the West End section of Boston where most of the Negro population lived. Thus at that early day a promising proportion of the Negroes had become business proprietors.

C. Professions

The sole representatives of the professions were two ministers. The fact that 26 persons were given as having independent residences,

but no occupations, and that some of these were widows, warrants the surmise that a few Negroes must have met with sufficient material prosperity to enable them to live on their savings and to leave their families provided for.

D. Higher Fields of Cultural Accomplishment

The higher field of cultural accomplishment was as yet unentered, save by one interesting figure. This was Phillis Wheatley, the poetess.¹ All of her poems had a deeply religious character. One, entitled "On Being Brought from Africa to America," is not only typical in this respect, but because of the author's own life history and the Negro's position in the community, possesses also a peculiar interest. It is as follows:-

"'Twas mercy brought me from my pagan land,
Taught my benighted soul to understand
That there's a God--that there's a Saviour, too:
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew.

Some view our sable race with scornful eye--
'Their color is a diabolic dye'.
Remember, Christians, Negroes black as Cain
May be refined, and join the angelic train".

6. Beginnings of Definite Social Organization

A. Formation of Masonic Lodge, 1784

In 1784 the Negroes in Boston formed a Masonic lodge with fifteen original members. This lodge was established under a charter from the

1. For Phillis Wheatley, see Wm. Wells Brown, The Black Man; W. C. Nell, Colored Patriots of the Revolution; and the Encyclopaedia Americana.

Masonic body in England. The founder of the lodge of whom mention has already been made was Prince Hall, one of the small number of Negro heads of families listed in the federal census six years later. By vocation he was a soapmaker, by avocation a preacher, and apparently he was a man of character and ability, who held the position of leader among his people.

B. Founding of the first Negro Church, 1805

A further and more important advance in social organization was made with the founding of the first Negro church; "the first distinctive-¹ly Negro American social institution." It was founded in 1805 and was originally called the African Meeting-House. Previously the Negroes had attended the same churches as the whites. In the earliest days, while slavery was still in existence, they were restricted to certain pews or to a slave gallery like the one which may still be seen in the Old North Church. Even after slavery went out of existence, as a general rule Negroes were expected to sit in the less desirable and least conspicuous seats. It was, apparently, not such discrimination, however, but rather the increase of the Negroes as an element in the population and the growth of a community of interest among them, which led to the formation of a separate Negro Church. This church was erected in Smith Court, off Belknap (now Joy) Street, in the West End. The building is said to have been put up entirely with Negro labor.

The establishment of the African Meeting-House had a decisive influence on the Negro Colony in two ways apart from its religious life.

1. W. E. B. DuBois, The Negro, P. 188

21.
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vocation he was a carpenter, by avocation a preacher, and apparently
he was a man of character and ability, who held the position of leader
among his people.

2. Founding of the First Negro Church, 1805

A further and more important advance in social organization was
made with the founding of the first Negro church; "the first distinctive-
ly Negro American social institution." It was founded in 1805 and was
originally called the African Meeting-House. Previously the Negroes
had attended the same churches as the whites. In the earliest days,
while slavery was still in existence, they were restricted to certain
pews or to a slave gallery like the one which may still be seen in the
Old North Church. Even after slavery went out of existence, as a
general rule Negroes were excluded to sit in the less desirable and
least conspicuous seats. It was, apparently, not even discrimination,
however, but rather the increase of the Negroes as an element in the
population and the growth of a community of interest among them, which
led to the formation of a separate Negro Church. This church was
erected in South Street, or F. Bellows (now Joy) Street, in the West End.
The building is said to have been put up entirely with Negro labor.
The establishment of the African Meeting-House and a decisive
influence on the Negro colony in two ways apart from the religious life.

In the first place, the fact that it was located in the West End no doubt greatly accelerated the movement of the Negroes to that section. Furthermore, by providing the Negroes with the only good-sized gathering place of their own, it naturally became their principal rallying-point, not only for religious purposes, but for whatever other object might bring them together. In this way it did much to promote their general group development.

C. Establishment of Negro School, 1820

As in the case of church attendance, so it was also in the case of school attendance;--for a long time Negro children went to the public schools with the white children, though apparently they were kept more or less apart from them. The number of Negro children who took advantage of this common privilege, however, was very small, one of the alleged reasons therefore being that they were ridiculed and at times mistreated by the white children. In 1798, some of the more ambitious Negro parents made the independent move of opening a private school, in the support of which friendly white persons soon assisted. Shortly after the erection of the African Meeting-House, in 1805, the school was transferred thither, and there continued in existence twenty-nine years. In 1800, the next step was taken; a petition, signed by sixty-six Negroes, asking that the city establish and support a separate school for Negro children, was submitted to the school committee. This request was refused, apparently on the ground that Negro children were still free to attend the general public schools, until 1820, when the city did start a Negro primary school. The fact that even then, however,

after a school had been especially founded, not more than a third of¹ the Negro children attended, shows that previously it must have been lack of ambition, combined with economic pressure, on the part of the majority of Negro parents, rather than unpleasant treatment of their children at the hands of white children, which was mainly responsible for keeping the Negro boys and girls away from the public schools. Though so far as available records show, no formal action was taken to revoke the Negro's privilege of attending the general schools, that privilege practically lapsed into disuse soon after the establishment of the separate school.

D. Negro's Right to the Franchise

The Negro's effective right to the franchise is said to have been established by the test case of Paul and John Cuffe, in 1778. These two thrifty Negroes, of whom the former, Paul Cuffe, was a successful ship-owner and far-ranging navigator, were called upon by the Town of Dartmouth, not far from Boston, to pay a personal tax. They demurred, contending that inasmuch as they were not allowed to vote, they should not be held to pay taxes. After protracted argument, the town authorities admitted that taxpaying and the privilege of voting should go together. The case was regarded as establishing a precedent. Any further question as to the Negro's rights was settled by the adoption of the Body of Liberties of 1790, which guaranteed manhood suffrage, without regard to race. Yet at that period very few of the Negroes in Boston exercised the franchise, or took any interest in political affairs.

1. Report of the Primary School Committee, June 15, 1846, P. 18.

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7. The Colonization Idea of 1815

A. Efforts of Paul Cuffe

In 1815, when the idea of African colonization for American Negroes was sweeping America, the country was startled by the unselfish enterprise of the above mentioned Paul Cuffe who had long thought of the unfortunate situation of his people in America and who himself shouldered the obligation to do something definite in their behalf. Paul Cuffe had been born in May, 1759, on one of the Elizabeth Islands near New Bedford, Mass., the son of a father who was once a slave from Africa and of an Indian mother. Interested in navigation, he made voyages to Russia, England, Africa and to the West Indies, and the South; and in time he commanded his own vessel, became generally respected, and by his wisdom rose to a fair degree of opulence. For twenty years he had thought especially about Africa, and in 1815 he took to Sierra Leone a total of nine families and thirty-eight persons at an expense to himself of nearly \$4,000. The people he took were well received at Sierra Leone, and Cuffe himself had greater and more far-reaching plans when he died September 7, 1817. He left an estate valued at \$20,000.¹

The colonization idea had many supporters and many non-supporters.

Carter G. Woodson states:

"The free people of color in Boston inquired of those desiring to send them to Africa because they were natives of that land; 'How can a man be born in two countries at the same time?' Referring also to the proposal to stop the slave trade by the establishment of a colony on the western coast of that continent, they said, 'We might as well believe

1. First Annual Report of American Colonization Society, P. 28.

that a watchman in the city of Boston would prevent thievery in New York; or that the custom-house there would prevent goods from being smuggled into any port in the U.S.'"1

B. Criticism of Henry Clay

In January 20, 1827, Henry Clay, then Secretary of State, speaking in the hall of the House of Representatives at the annual meeting of the American Colonization Society, said:

"Of all classes of our population, the most vicious is that of the free colored. It is the inevitable result of their moral, political, and civil degradation. Contaminated themselves, they extend their vices to all around them, to the slaves and to the whites. Every emigrant to Africa is a missionary carrying with him credentials in the holy cause of civilization, religion, and free institutions." 2

C. Criticism of Robert Y. Hayne

In the course of the next month Robert Y. Hayne gave a Southern criticism in two addresses on a memorial presented in the U. S. Senate by the Colonization Society. At the close of his brilliant attack, still making a veiled plea for the continuance of slavery, he, nevertheless, rose to genuine statesmanship in dealing with the problem of the Negro, saying,

"While this process is going on the colored classes are gradually diffusing themselves throughout the country and are making steady advances in intelligence and refinement, and if half the zeal were displayed in bettering their condition that is now wasted in the vain and fruitless effort of sending them abroad, their intellectual and moral improvement would be steady and rapid."3

D. Criticism of William Lloyd Garrison

William Lloyd Garrison was untiring and merciless in flaying the inconsistencies and selfishness of the colonization organization. In

1. Carter G. Woodson, The Negro in our History, PP. 290, 291.
2. B. Brawley, Social History of American Negro, PP. 125, 126.
3. Theodore D. Jervey, Robert Y. Hayne and His Times, PP. 207, 208.

an editorial in the *Liberator*, July 9, 1831, he charged the Society, first, with persecution in compelling free people to emigrate against their will and in discouraging their education at home; second, with falsehood in saying that the Negroes were natives of Africa when they were no more so than white Americans were natives of Great Britain; third, with cowardice in asserting that the continuance of the Negro population in the country involved dangers; and finally, with infidelity in denying that the Gospel has full power to reach the hatred in the hearts of men.

"Criticism of the American Colonization Society was prompted by a variety of motives; but the organization made itself vulnerable at many points. The movement attracted extraordinary attention, but has had practically no effect whatever on the position of the Negro in the U.S. Its work in connection with the founding of Liberia, however, is of the highest importance."¹

8. The Rise of a Spirit of Self-reliance During this Period

The founding of the Negro Masonic lodge, the Negro Church, and the Negro school, and the successful protest of the Cuffes against taxation without representation, are most of all significant as bearing witness to the rise of a spirit of self-reliance on the part of the Negroes. Previously they had been dependent, as slaves or servants, on the whites, with little initiative of their own. Their budding independence, therefore, first led them naturally into a centripetal movement of separate organizations among themselves. Any hostility on the part of the whites was apparently a secondary factor in this result.

1. B. Brawley, Social History of American Negro, PP. 127.

While the question of the Negro was thus a subject of debate and a cause of more or less uneasiness, it was still, however, a question which came up only intermittently, which on such occasions was discussed without excitement, and which, furthermore, was regarded as pre-dominantly local in its bearing. It neither deeply agitated nor seriously divided the community. This in substance, was the situation in Boston at that early period, as the first half-century following the Declaration of Independence neared its close.

They make us realize situations change.

"Group behavior", says Ellwood, "is almost always a matter of following a leader. In other words, the method used by mass groups to adjust themselves to new situations, especially when these situations are complex and difficult, is to copy the conduct of some, proposed or illustrated, by the relatively few individuals who are the leaders of the group."

1. Type of Social Change Due to Type of Leadership

"The type of social change which occurs is thus a reflection of the type of leadership which prevails. For, after all, the leaders direct the processes of social control, as they direct most of the other social processes. Thus it follows that whatever is achieved in the way of progress is the direct result of a type of leadership."

It depends upon the production of leaders--of men possessing common sense, initiative, energy, enthusiasm, creative and constructive power, but also of men who are men with discipline, flexibility, justice, patience, great humor and social loyalty, and devotion and understanding. These constructive and feasible leaders need to know how to appeal to the best instincts of the worst element in human nature,

1. Ellwood, *Social Progress*, p. 222.
2. W. G. Ellwood, *Psychology of Human Society*, p. 222.
3. W. G. Ellwood, *Psychology of Human Society*, p. 222.

CHAPTER IV

Trends Toward Leadership and Racial Consciousness:
1830-1865.

1. Leaders as Agents of Progress

In social progress a very important part is played by a significant type among exceptional men who are known as leaders, for they¹ are the ones who shape group behavior. Most men are mere imitators, merely followers, dependent upon leaders for the behavior changes they make as social situations change.

"Group behavior", says Ellwood, "is almost always a matter of following a leader. In other words, the method used by human groups to adjust themselves to new situations, especially when these situations are complex and difficult, is to copy the action-patterns, proposed or illustrated, by the relatively few individuals who are the leaders of the group."²

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It depends upon the production of leaders--of men possessing common sense, initiative, daring, enthusiasm, creative and constructive power, but also at the same time, men with discipline, flexibility, poise, patience, great human and social loyalty, and devotion and understanding. These constructive and reasonable leaders need to know how to appeal to the best instead of the worst element in human nature,

1. Hertzler, Social Progress, p. 222.

2. C. A. Ellwood, Psychology of Human Society, p. 335.

3. E. S. Bogardus, Fundamentals of Society Psychology, p. 457.

and also not to expect miracles, but to know how to act in conformity with scientific evolutionary principles.

B. "Social Idealists"

The leaders of special significance in this study are what Hertzler calls "social idealists". These are the social inventors, the prophets, the seers, the announcers of new verities, the architects of new social states. They are men and women who have conceived the higher possibilities of human good, and who propose to eradicate the social and moral shortcomings of the present.

"They are independent spirits, pioneer thinkers, the objectors, dissenters, insurgents, iconoclasts, who refuse to be enmeshed absolutely in the confusions of their time. With intellect superior to the average intellect, a social perspective given only to a few, and a vision which enables them to see and proclaim ideals and states which are above the comprehension of the mass, and champion the causes for bringing these into being. They are of that advanced and uncompromising minority who lead the way to better things and keep alive the demand for them. They are the standard bearers of man's ideals and aspirations. While average men merely follow the beaten track, and not without a great deal of delay and lingering by the wayside, the idealists, true intellectual pioneers, cut a rough path through the wilderness of the future and gladly follow it through however lonely and untrodden ways. Of course, the path will be changed and improved as others traverse it, but the social idealists originally laid it out because others could not and would not do it, nor did they see why it should be done."¹

2. Attitude of Negro Leaders Toward the Problem

Facing America

It is not the purpose of the present chapter primarily to consider social progress on the part of the Boston Negro. Just now we are concerned with the attitude of the Negro himself toward the problem that seemed to present itself to America and for which such different

1. Hertzler, Social Progress, PP. 226-227.

and also not to suspect miracles, but to know how to act in conformity with scientific evolutionary principles.

2. "Social Idealists"

The leaders of social righteousness in this study are what Huxley calls "social idealists". These are the social investors, the prophets, the seers, the announcers of new visions, the makers of new social states. They are men and women who have conceived the higher possibilities of human good, and who propose to eradicate the social and moral shortcomings of the present.

"They are religious spirits, visionaries, the prophets, the seers, the announcers, who refuse to be contented with the present, but who are in the constant effort to see the average idealist, a social perspective given only to a few, and a vision which enables them to see and proclaim ideals and states which are above the comprehension of the mass, and through the vision for bringing these into being. They are of that advanced and more-advanced minority who lead the way to better things and keep alive the demand for them. They are the standard bearers of new ideas and new visions. While average men merely follow the crowd, and are not without a great deal of delay and lingering by the way, the idealists, the intellectual pioneers, cut a rough path through the wilderness of the future and finally follow it through however lonely and untraveled ways. Of course, the path will be changed and improved as others discover it, but the social idealists originally laid it out because others could not see it, nor did they see why it should be done."

3. Attitude of Negro Leaders Toward the Problem

Racial Justice

It is not the purpose of the present chapter primarily to consider social progress on the part of the Negro people. Just now we are concerned with the attitude of the Negro himself toward the problem that seemed to present itself to America and for which such different

solutions were proposed. It is only to state an historical fact to say that the great heart of the Negro people in the South did not believe in immediate action, but rather hoped and prayed for a better day to come. But what was the attitude of those people, progressive citizens and thinking leaders who were not satisfied with the condition of the race and who had to take a stand on the issues that confronted them? These men were the "social idealists" who conceived the higher possibilities of human good and, although they believed in the power of prayer, believed in action, also, to eradicate the social and moral shortcomings of the present time.

A. Anti-slavery controversy

This new period opened in the midst of agitation and anti-slavery controversy brought on by the appearance in Boston, in 1829, of the most widely discussed book ever written by a Negro.

3. David Walker's Book, "The Appeal"

David Walker, its author, was living in Boston as the proprietor of a second-hand clothing store on Brattle Street. He felt very strongly on the subject of slavery and addressed various audiences of Negroes in Boston and elsewhere. His book, "The Appeal", in four articles; together with a Preamble to the Colored Citizens of the World, but in particular, and very expressly, to those of the U. S. of America, was remarkably successful.

Article I, Walker headed, "Our Wretchedness in Consequence of Slavery". In this he says, "I ask you, O! my brothers, are we men? What right, then, have we to obey and call any man master? In

resolutions were proposed. It is only to state an historical fact to say that the great heart of the Negro people in the South did not believe in immediate action, but rather hoped and prayed for a better day to come. But what was the attitude of those people, progressive citizens and thinking leaders who were not satisfied with the condition of the race and who had to take a stand on the issues that confronted them? These men were the "social idealists" who conceived the higher possibilities of human good and, although they believed in the power of prayer, believed in action, also, to eradicate the social and moral wrongs of the present time.

1. Anti-slavery controversy

This new period opened in the midst of a reaction and anti-slavery controversy brought on by the appearance in 1838, in 1839, of the most widely discussed book ever written by a Negro.

2. David Walker's book, "The Appeal"

David Walker, the author, was living in Boston as the proprietor of a second-hand clothing store on State Street. He felt very strongly on the subject of slavery and addressed various meetings of Negroes in Boston and elsewhere. His book, "The Appeal", in four articles, together with a preamble to the colored citizens of the world, but in particular, and very expressly, to those of the U. S. of America, was remarkably successful.

Article I, Walker declared, "Our protestations in consequence of slavery". In this he says, "I ask you, O my brethren, are we men? What right, then, have we to obey and call any man master? Is

Article III, Walker considered "Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the Preachers of the Religion of Jesus Christ". He pointed out the general failure of Christian ministers to live up to the teachings of Christ.

"Even here in Boston", we are informed, "pride and prejudice have got to such a pitch, that in the very houses erected to the Lord they have built little places for the reception of colored people, where they must sit during meeting, or keep away from the house of God."

Article IV was headed "Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the Colonizing Plan".

"Here," he says, "is a demonstrative proof of a plan got up, by a gang of slaveholders, to select free people of color from among the slaves, that our more miserable brethren may be the better secured in ignorance and wretchedness, to work their farms and dig their mines, and thus go on enriching the Christians with their blood and groans."

This document created the greatest consternation in the South. The Mayor of Savannah wrote to Mayor Otis of Boston, demanding that Walker be punished. Otis, in a widely published letter, replied expressing his disapproval of the pamphlet, but saying that the author had done nothing that made him "amendable" to the laws.

Walker died suddenly in 1830 and while there was no real proof of the fact, among the Negro people there was a strong belief that he met with foul play.

A. The Disabilities of the Negro

As shown in Walker's "Appeal" the disabilities of the Negro in Boston continued. He had to face all sorts of impediments in getting education or in pursuing honest industry; he had nothing whatever to do with the administration of justice, and generally he was subject to insult and outrage.

Article III, Walker considered "Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the
Presence of the Religion of Jesus Christ". He pointed out the general
failure of Christian ministers to live up to the teachings of Christ.

"Even here in Boston", we are informed, "white and prejudice have got
to such a pitch, that in the very houses erected to the Lord they have
built little places for the reception of colored people, where they
must sit during meeting, or keep away from the house of God."

Article IV was headed "Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the
Colonizing Idea".

"Here", he says, "is a demonstrative proof of a plan got up, by a gang
of slaveholders, to select 'free people of color' from among the slaves,
that our white miserable nation may be the better secured in ignorance
and stupidity, to work easier hands and fill their mines, and thus go
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Boston continued. He had to face all sorts of injustices in getting
education or in pursuing honest industry; he had nothing whatever to do
with the administration of justice, not generally he was subject to
insult and outrage.

B. The Stand of the Church

One might have supposed that on all this proscription and denial of the ordinary rights of human beings the Christian Church would have taken a positive stand. Unfortunately, as so often happens, it was on the side of property and vested interest rather than on that of the oppressed.

In James G. Birney's indictment "The American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery", issued in 1840, he showed among other things that while in 1780 the Methodist Episcopal Church had opposed slavery and in 1784 had given a slave-holder one month to repent or withdraw from its conferences, by 1836 it had so drifted away from its original position as to disclaim

"Any right, wish, or intention to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave, as it existed in the slaveholding states of the union".¹

In Boston, in a church that did not welcome and that made little provision for Negroes, a consecrated deacon invited into his own pew some Negro people, whereupon he lost the right to hold a pew in his church. He decided that there should be some place where there might be more freedom of thought and genuine Christianity, he brought others into the plan, and the effort that he put forth resulted in what has since become the Tremont Temple Baptist Church.

4. The Abolition Movement

"Into all this proscription and denial of the fundamental principles of Christianity, suddenly came the program of the Abolitionists, and it spoke with tongues of fire, and had all the vigor and force of a crusade."²

1. Page 12.

2. Brawley, Soc. Hist. of Amer. Neg., P. 219.

The free Negroes of Boston were not passive during the agitation movement. They took a lively interest in the cause that had for its ultimate end the freedom of the slave. They did not comfort themselves with the consciousness that they were free; but thought of their brethren who were bound, and sympathized with them.

From the year 1830 up until the beginning of the Civil War, the social progress of the Boston Negro can be considered only through his part in the Abolition Movement. This movement was preeminent during this period and through it many Negro leaders rose up and came to the front.

"Massachusetts' part in the Abolition Movement has been told and retold so often that it has passed into the common stock of everyday knowledge".¹ In this movement citizens of Boston both white and colored fought side by side for a common objective for, as King says,

"The sympathetic whites realized that their social progress had followed much the same line of development as that of the Negro except as it had been modified by the slave status with which the Negro began his residence in this country. The principle, nevertheless, had been the same!"²

Although the contribution of these whites who suffered scorn and ridicule is mentioned, it is the present purpose of this chapter to note the part taken by the Negroes of Boston in this movement, as he, the first among his people to have experienced freedom, had a specific share in the struggle which gave freedom to his brethren.

A. Arose in Boston

The Abolition Movement arose in Boston and till the end its moral

1. Ferris, Wm. H., The African Abroad, Vol. II, P. 714.
2. Willis J. King, The Negro in American Life, P. 86.

center was in that city. It forced the question of the Negro before the community in a way that would not down, and which no longer permitted its discussion in calmness. It changed that question from one of mainly local bearing to one of vital import to the nation. It agitated Boston, the North, and the whole country, to the foundations. It hastened and was, indeed, one of the chief provoking causes of the Civil War. Ultimately it accomplished the eradication of slavery throughout the reestablished Union.

5. The Negroes of Boston as Movement's Immediate Forerunners

The Negroes of Boston, interestingly and appropriately enough, were in a sense this movement's immediate forerunners.

A. The General Coloured Association of Massachusetts, 1830

About 1830, some of the most progressive Negroes of Boston and the state at large organized the General Coloured Association of Massachusetts, which had for its purpose promoting the welfare of the race. It had among its leading men the most intelligent and public-spirited colored citizens of Boston. James G. Barbadoes, Coffin Pitts, John E. Scarlett, the Eastons, Hosea and Joshua: William C. Nell, Thomas Cole, Thomas Dalton, Frederick Brimley, Walker Lewis and John T. Hilton were a few of "the faithful". In January, 1833, the following communication was sent to the white anti-slavery society of New England.

"Boston, January 15, 1833.

"To the Board of Managers of the New England Anti-Slavery Society:

"The Massachusetts General Colored Association, cordially approv-

ing the objects and principles of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, would respectfully communicate their desire to become auxiliary thereto. They have accordingly chosen one of their members to attend the annual meeting of the Society as their delegate (Mr. Joshua Easton) and solicit his acceptance in that capacity.

"Thomas Dalton, President,

"William C. Nell, Vice-Pres.

"James G. Barbadoes, Secretary.

"The request was granted", says Williams, "but a few hints among friends on the outside sufficed to demonstrate the folly and hurtfulness of anti-slavery societies composed exclusively of men of color."¹

B. Negroes in the White Societies

Within the next two years colored organizations perished; and their members took their place in the white societies. Such colored men as Charles Lenox Remond and Williams Wells Brown, of Boston, were soon seen as orators and presiding officers in the different anti-slavery societies of the state.

"By association and sympathy these colored orators took on the polish of Anglo-Saxon scholarship. Of the influence of the Anti-Slavery Societies upon the Colored man, Maria Weston Chapman once said, it is 'church and university, high school and common school, to all who need real instruction and true religion. Of it what a throng of authors, editors, lawyers, orators and accomplished gentlemen of color have taken their degree'. Aroused by the Societies, the very white men who had forgotten and denied the claim of the black man to the rights of humanity, now thunder that claim at every gate, from cottage to capitol, from school-house to university, from the railroad carriage to the house of God. They inspire him to climb to their side by a visible acted gospel of freedom. Thus, instead of bowing to prejudice, they conquer it."²

6. William Lloyd Garrison and the Liberator

The man who now advanced, to fulfill the mission of giving the slaves their freedom, attached so much importance to Walker's "Appeal"

1. Williams, Hist. of Negro Race in America, Vol. II, p. 79.

2. Ibid, P. 79-80.

that he characterized it as "one of the most remarkable productions of the age."¹ It came into his hands shortly after its publication, and before he had fully determined upon his own course.² In all probability, it appreciably influenced him, and thus, bore, not only a precedent and perhaps prophetic, but in some degree a causative, relation to his subsequent crusade.

This man, a member of the white race, was William Lloyd Garrison, and the definitive beginning of the Abolition Movement, as history distinguishes it, was the appearance in Boston, on January 1, 1831, of the first number of his weekly paper, "The Liberator", with this pithy announcement of the editor's purpose:

"Assenting to the self-evident truth maintained in the American Declaration of Independence, 'that all men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights--among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness', I shall strenuously contend for the immediate enfranchisement of our slave population."

On the one side, the Declaration of Independence; on the other, slavery: what was this? Nothing more and nothing less than the re-appearance of that contradiction which from the beginning had been the Nemesis of the Puritan conscience. That conscience had been compelled to do away with slavery first in Massachusetts, then in the whole North. Now it was to be mercilessly pursued till it should have put an end to slavery throughout the nation.

"The great difference between the early abolition societies and the later anti-slavery movement of which Garrison was the representative figure was the difference between a humanitarian impulse tempered by expedience and one that had all the power of a direct challenge."³

1. Garrison, Wendell, and Garrison, William Lloyd Garrison, Vol. 1, P.231.
2. Ibid Vol. I, P. 160
3. Brawley, Social History of American Negro, P. 219.

The "Liberator" immediately became the object of an onslaught of invective from the South and of censure in the North. Its suppression by force was urged upon the mayor of Boston. That official replied that, as a result of his inquiries, he found the paper had only an "insignificant countenance and support" in the community, and that it "had not made, nor was likely to make, converts among the respectable classes." He said he had "ferreted out the paper and its editor; that his office was an obscure hole, his only visible auxiliary a Negro boy, and his supporters a very few insignificant persons of all colors."

A. The New England Anti-Slavery Society, 1832

One year following the establishment of the "Liberator", however, these "insignificant persons" took the first stride in the abolition movement's effective working organization, by launching the New England Anti-Slavery Society. The meeting at which this society was formed, on the evening of January 6, 1832, took place in the old African Meeting-House, which thereby, and also because of its subsequent use for abolition gatherings, may be said to have become to the Negroes in particular the "Cradle of Liberty" which Faneuil Hall is to the Community at large. Though the twelve signatures affixed to the previously drafted declaration of principles were those of white men, about one quarter of the seventy-two first signers of the constitution were Negroes.² It is interesting to observe in passing that among the specific objects of this organization was that of raising funds to establish a manual training school for Negro Youth. Even the pioneer band of abolitionists,

1. Garrison, Wendell, and Garrison, William Lloyd Garrison, Vol. 1, P. 245.
2. For fuller details regarding the society's formation, see William Lloyd Garrison, Vol. I, Pp. 279-82.

notwithstanding their apostolic zeal for the Negro's abstract rights, recognized what was to become increasingly obvious as the years went by--namely, that practical preparation for earning a livelihood had a vital relation to the Negro's welfare.

Thenceforth the Negro's participation in the abolition movement steadily enlarged. Though its generals and upper officers were, with a few exceptions, of the other race, some of the sturdiest of its second lieutenants, and corporals, as well as the most devoted body of its privates in the ranks, were of the lowly people whom it was to raise to the free estate of manhood. The Negro's unflinching loyalty was an ever-present consolation and support to Garrison and his co-laborers¹ "outweighing mountains of abuse from other sources."

B. The American Anti-Slavery Society, 1833

In December, 1833, through Garrison's initiative, the formation of the American Anti-Slavery Society was effected at an assemblage in Philadelphia, attended by representatives of ten states. One of Boston's six delegates was a Negro, James G. Barbadoes, of whom mention has already been made. This national organization united all the anti-slavery agencies throughout the North in a common crusade.

C. The World Anti-Slavery Convention at London, 1840

An event from which the Abolition Movement derived a broader moral confirmation was the assembling of a World's Anti-Slavery Convention at London in 1840, at which representatives from the British Isles, the Continental countries, and other quarters of the globe, joined with

1. Garrison, Wendall, and Garrison, William Lloyd Garrison, Vol. 1, P.255.

those of the U. S. in a common appeal against slavery wherever it was still in existence. Not a few Negroes were sent as delegates to the London Convention. Of these, Charles Lenox Remond, whose early connection with abolition events has been mentioned, had the most noteworthy experience. On the voyage--the captain of the ship being a Virginian--he was consigned to the steerage. His reception in England, however, was a marked contrast. "Our colored friend Remond invariably accompanies us", wrote Garrison, "and is a great favorite in every circle. Prejudice against color is unknown here"¹. Remond was much in demand as a speaker and his stay abroad was prolonged to a year and a half while he traveled in England, Scotland, and Ireland. On his return, in December, 1841, he brought with him a remarkable document,--an "Address from the Irish People to their Countrymen and Countrywomen in America."² Sixty thousand names, with that of Daniel O'Connell at the head, were appended to this monster memorial, which called upon Irish-Americans to treat the Negroes as brethren, and to unite everywhere with the Abolitionists.

D. The Rise of Agitation for Woman Suffrage

This London Convention proved equally memorable, moreover, by reason of an unforeseen by-result. Among the American delegates from Boston and elsewhere were a considerable number of women, for whose full participation in abolition activities Garrison had stood out determinedly. But in England at that time such equal recognition of women was unknown. All the female delegates, therefore, though the creden-

1. Garrison, Wendell, and Garrison, William Lloyd Garrison, Vol. II, P. 383.

2. Ibid., Vol. III, P. 43., Vol. III, P. 43.

tials they held from their respective societies were as formal and complete as those of the men, were excluded. The episode aroused so much feeling, pro and con, and led to so much debate on the general question of the position of women in affairs, that it is regarded as marking the decisive beginning, both in the U. S. and in England, of the movement for woman suffrage.¹ That such should have been the genesis of the demand for the civil and political equality of the sexes introduces another of those strikingly suggestive inter-relations between the emancipation of the Negro and other great human advances toward freedom's fuller realization.

It is interesting to note here the account of Sojourner Truth at the second National Woman's Suffrage Convention, held in Akron, Ohio, in 1852, and presided over by a Mrs. Frances D. Gage. Although Sojourner Truth was born in New York, she lived in Boston during her travels and her life not only proved a blessing to the women of Boston but to America as well.

On the second day of the convention in Akron, in a corner, crouched against the wall, sat Sojourner Truth, this woman of care, her elbows resting on her knees, and her chin resting upon her broad, hard palms. From time to time came to the presiding officer the request, "Don't let her speak; it will ruin us. Every newspaper in the land will have our cause mixed with abolition and niggers, and we shall be utterly denounced." Gradually, however, the meeting waxed warm. Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Universalist preachers had come to hear and discuss the resolutions presented. One argued the superiority of

1. Garrison, Wendall, and Garrison, William Lloyd Garrison, Vol. II, P. 381, footnote.

the male intellect, another the sin of Eve, and the women, most of whom did not speak in meeting, were becoming filled with dismay. Then slowly from her seat in the corner rose Sojourner Truth, who till now had scarcely lifted her head. Slowly and solemnly to the front she moved, laid her old bonnet at her feet, and turned her great, speaking eyes upon the chair. Mrs. Gage, quite equal to the occasion, stepped forward and announced "Sojourner Truth," and begged the audience to be silent a few minutes. "The tumult subsided at once, and every eye was fixed on this almost Amazon form, which stood nearly six feet high, head erect, and eye piercing the upper air, like one in a dream." At her first word there was a profound hush. She spoke in deep tones, which, though not loud, reached every ear in the house, and even the throng at the doors and windows. To one man who had ridiculed the general helplessness of woman, her needing to be assisted into carriages and to be given the best place everywhere, she said, "Nobody eber helped me into carriages, or ober mud puddles, or gibs me any best place"; and raising herself to her full height, with a voice pitched like rolling thunder, she asked, "And a'nt I a woman? Look at me. Look at my arm." And she bared her right arm to the shoulder, showing her tremendous muscular power. "I have plowed, and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me--and a'n't I a woman? I have borne five chilern and seen 'em mos' all sold off into slavery, and when I cried out with a mother's grief, none but Jesus heard--and a'n't I a woman?....Dey talks 'bout dis ting in de head--and what dis dey call it?" "Intellect," said some one near. "Dat's it, honey. What's dat got to do with

the male intellect, another the aim of love, and the woman, most of whom
 did not speak in reason, were becoming filled with dismay. They slowly
 from her seat in the corner rose together, and still now had
 scarcely lifted her head. Slowly and solemnly, in the front she moved,
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 upon the chair. Mrs. Gage, quite equal to the occasion, stepped for-
 ward and announced "Rejoice, my friend," and begged the audience to be
 silent a few minutes. "The tumult subsided at once, and every eye was
 fixed on this almost motionless figure, which stood nearly six feet high, and
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 about the thing in its need--and what she say call it? "Intellect."
 said some one near. "Let's sit, honey. There's but for to be with

women's rights or niggers' rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint and yourn holds a quart, wouldn't ye be mean not to let me have my little half-measure full?" And she pointed her significant finger and sent a keen glance at the minister who had made the argument. The cheering was long and loud. "Den dat little man in black dar, he say women can't have as much rights as man, 'cause Christ wa'n't a woman. But whar did Christ come from?" Rolling thunder could not have stilled that crowd as did those deep, wonderful tones as the woman stood there with her outstretched arms and her eyes of fire. Raising her voice she repeated, "Whar did Christ come from? From God and a woman. Man had nothing to do with Him." Turning to another objector, she took up the defense of Eve. She was pointed and witty, solem and serious at will, and at almost every sentence awoke deafening applause; and she ended by asserting, "If de fust woman God made was strong enough to turn the world upside down, all alone, dese togedder,"---and she glanced over the audience---"ought to be able to turn it back and get it right side up again, and now dey is asking to do it, de men better let 'em."

"Amid roars of applause", wrote Mrs. Gage, "she returned to her corner, leaving more than one of us with streaming eyes and hearts beating with gratitude."¹ Thus, as so frequently happened, Sojourner Truth turned a difficult situation into splendid victory. She not only made an eloquent plea for the slave, but placing herself upon the broad-²est principles of humanity, she saved the day for woman suffrage as well!"

1. B. Brawley, A Social History of the American Negro, pp. 169, 170.

2. B. Brawley, A Social History of the American Negro, pp. 170-171.

E. Frederick Douglass and William W. Brown

It is important to mention at this point two Negroes who, although active in the Abolition Movement, like Sojourner Truth, were not Bostonians by birth but moved here during this period.

The most remarkable of these two was Frederick Douglass, who only a few years before, in 1838, has escaped from slavery in Maryland. In 1841, Douglass, at Garrison's instance, was secured as an agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, and in this capacity he traveled and lectured in the New England States for the next four years. His "Narrative of my Experience in Slavery," published in Boston in 1844, did much to further the abolition cause. In 1845, he went to Europe, and spent two years in the British Isles making anti-slavery addresses. He proved the most eloquent and powerful apostle of freedom that his race produced, and in virtue of his long and brilliant career came generally to be regarded as the foremost representative of his people.

The second Negro, who quickly rose to prominence, was William Wells Brown. He, too, was an escaped slave. He came to Boston about 1845, and soon took an active part in the Abolitionist agitation, as a speaker and writer. His first book, the "Narrative of W. W. Brown, a Fugitive Slave," appeared in 1847. It had a wide circulation. In 1849, Brown visited England and the Continent, in the dual capacity of delegate to a congress on international peace and representative of the Abolitionists.

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leadership, the fight for progress was furthered.

7. The Emancipation Proclamation

In the long and bitter contest on American slavery the Abolitionists finally reaped the reward of their labor.

The result of their labor came at last, when, in September, 1862, the President announced that on the first day of the new year he would issue an edict of freedom to the slaves in all states or parts of states in rebellion against the Federal Government.

In Boston, that New Year's Day was one of joyful thanksgiving and celebration. Two great gatherings were held; one at the Old Music Hall, in the afternoon, and the other in Tremont Temple, through the whole day and evening. At first there was painful suspense, mingled with vague fear, for the reason that no tidings of the Proclamation had yet been received. When this suspense was relieved, however, by the announcement that the text of that edict was coming over the wires, the gathering broke into a storm of applause, culminating in nine tremendous cheers for Lincoln, and three more for Garrison.

Still more memorable was the concluding evening session in the Temple. This was in charge of the Negroes themselves, and two of the speakers, John S. Rock and the renowned Frederick Douglass, were of the race to whom that day brought promise of deliverance. The climax of enthusiasm came when, a few minutes after nine o'clock one of the abolitionists rushed in, breathless, with a newspaper proof-sheet--which he had contrived to get into his hands and to make off with before he could be stopped!--of the Proclamation. First amid hushed silence, then with

outbursts of applause, this was read: from the beginning,

"Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do order and declare that all persons held as slaves are and hereafter shall be free, and upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

While shouts and cheers filled the hall, Douglass, a man of noble mien and figure, advanced to the front of the platform, with a gesture brought the multitude to their feet, and led them in singing, with fervor unrestrained, the old hymn, "Blow ye the trumpet; blow!"

"Let all the nations know
To earth's remotest bounds
The year of jubilee has come."

The meeting then ended, but the Negroes thronged to their churches for services of prayer and praise that lasted far into the night.¹

Surely it was a striking and appropriate coincidence, if nothing more, that as the first step in the abolition movement's working organization, namely, the formation of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, was taken in a Negro church, so the concluding celebration of that movement's crowning achievement, and the first reading of the immortal Proclamation in Boston, should have occurred at a gathering under the auspices of the Negro people; and that the spontaneous paean of victory on that occasion should have been raised by one of that race who in his own life experience embodied the rise from slavery to freedom.

1. The foregoing account of the celebrations is based on an article, "Emancipation Day in Boston, 1863," by Francis Jackson Garrison, which appeared in the New York Evening Post, Dec. 28, 1912.

8. The Emphasis on Negro Education

It has been maintained that in their emphasis on education and on the highest culture possible for the Negro, the Abolitionists were mere visionaries who had no practical knowledge whatever of the Race's real needs. This was neither true or just. It was absolutely necessary first of all to establish the Negro's right to enter any field occupied by any other man, and time has vindicated this position. Even in 1850, however, the needs of the majority of the Negro people for advance in economic life were not overlooked either by the Abolitionists or the Negroes themselves.

"They believed," says Curti, "that the capacity to make a living becomes enlarged into the capacity to make a life and that selected colored youths should be trained to go out and lead their people by showing them how to acquire land and homes, vocations and skills; by teaching them to respect labor, especially skilled labor, and to appreciate the value that such work had for the making of character."¹

Martin V. Delany, one of the Negro Abolitionists interested in the establishing of an industrial college for Negroes, said of industrial education:

"Our elevation must be the result of self-efforts, and work of our own hands. No other human power can accomplish it. Let our young men and young women prepare themselves for usefullness and business; that the men may enter into merchandise trading, and other things of importance; the young women may become teachers of various kinds, and otherwise fill places of usefullness, parents must turn their attention more to the education of their children. We mean, to educate them for useful practical business purposes. Educate them for the store and counting-house--to do everyday practical business. Consult the children's propensities, and direct their education according to their inclinations. It may be that there is too great a desire on the part of parents to give their children a professional education, before the body of the people are ready for it. A people must be a business people and have more to depend upon than mere help in people's houses and hotels, before they are either able to support or capable of properly appreciating the services of professional men among them. This has been one of our great

1. Merle Curti, The Social Ideas of American Educators, pp. 289-290.

mistakes--we have gone in advance of ourselves. We have commenced at the superstructure of the building, instead of the foundation--at the top instead of the bottom. We should first be mechanics and common tradesmen, and professions as a matter of course would grow out of the wealth made thereby."¹

We cannot too much emphasize the fact that the leaders of this period were by no means impractical theorists but men who were scientifically approaching the social problem of their people. They not only anticipated such ideas as those of industrial education, but they also endeavored to lay firmly the foundations of racial self-respect.

9. Noteworthy Beginnings in Professional and Social Life

In professional life the Negro had by 1860 made a noteworthy beginning. Already he had been forced to give attention to the law, though as yet little by the way of actual practice had been done. In this field Robert Morris, Jr., of Boston, and E. G. Walker were foremost. William C. Nell, of Boston, was at the time prominent in politics and newspaper work.

Boston had among its teachers the scholarly Thomas Paul; among its clergymen Leonard A. Grimes and John T. Raymond; among its business men J. B. Smith and Coffin Pitts, and among its physicians the eminent John V. DeGrasse.

The first real impetus to bring Negroes in considerable numbers into the professional world seems to have come from the American Colonization Society when Negroes prepared themselves for service in the Liberian colony.

1. Benj. Brawley, Social History of the American Negro, pp. 247-248.

"For this purpose", says Kelly Miller, "John V. De Grasse completed the medical course at Bowdoin in 1849 and in 1854 was admitted as a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society."¹

John V. De Grasse was perhaps the most accomplished colored gentleman in New England between 1850 and 1860. The following notice in reference to him appeared in the Boston Journal in August, 1854:

"On the 24th of August, 1854, Mr. De Grasse was admitted in due form a member of the 'Massachusetts Medical Society'. It is the first instance of such honor being conferred upon a colored man in this State, at least, and probably in the country; and therefore it deserves particular notice, both because the means by which he has reached this distinction are creditable to his own intelligence and perseverance, and because others of his class may be stimulated to seek an elevation which has hitherto been supposed unattainable by men of color. The Boston medical profession, it must be acknowledged, has done itself honor in thus discarding the law of caste, and generously acknowledging real merit, without regard to the hue of the skin."

Whatever may have been the situation of special groups, however, it can readily be seen that there were at least some Negroes in Boston--a good many in the aggregate--who by 1860 were maintaining a high standard in their ordinary social life.

It is thus evident that honorable achievement on the part of the Boston Negro and general advance in social welfare by no means began with the Emancipation Proclamation. While there was as yet no book of unquestioned genius or scholarship, there was considerable intellectual activity, and only time and a little more freedom from economic pressure were needed for the production of works of the first order of merit.

1. Kelly Miller, The Background of the Negro Physician, Journal of Negro History, April, 1916.

CHAPTER V

Social Progress Accomplishments: 1865-1900

1. Environment as a Factor in Progress

Progress is a matter of achievement along various lines and achievement seems to be partly a matter of environment.

"Lester F. Ward, on the basis of Odin's study, concludes that the proportionate amount of native ability is approximately the same for all classes, and even for all districts and races, the upper classes developing more men of achievement simply because of their superior opportunities."¹

Hertzler claims this a strong statement to make, since the fact must be faced that selective processes are at work pushing the inferior into the lowest classes, and keeping them there. It is granted though by scientific men that, in general, given two people of approximately equal native ability, the one having the greater opportunity is most likely to become the greater achiever. The environment, for that is what opportunity is, furnishes the stimulus for achievement and determines the direction of its development. It determines the degree to which inherent characters shall be developed or perfected.

"If environment is to be effective in achievement, it must be clean and energizing, it must be varied and offer a large number of powerful and diverse influences, especially of an educational and occupational nature, it must offer adequacy of life on the material side, and richness and encouragement on the spiritual side. It cannot be unclean, narrow, mediocre, poor, or mean."²

1. Hertzler, Social Progress, P. 306.
2. F. A. Bushée, Principles of Sociology, PP. 377-384.

2. Result of War Environment upon the Negro

At the conclusion of the Civil War, a number of factors combined in making public sentiment in Boston vastly more favorable to the Negro than it had ever been before.

A. Negroes given Equal Opportunity as Soldiers

The admirable manner in which the Negro troops had acquitted themselves compelled both respect and gratitude on the part of the whites and gave the Negroes a feeling of self-respect that comes from profitable employment and equal opportunity.

A common poster of the War represented a Negro soldier bearing the flag, the shackles of a slave being broken, a young Negro boy reading a newspaper, and several children going into a public school. Over all were the words

"All Slaves were made Freemen by Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, January 1st, 1863. Come, then, able-bodied Colored Men, to the nearest United States camp, and fight for the Stars and Stripes."

B. Winning Respect and Public Sentiment

"To the credit of the enlisted men be it said that in their new environment they acted with dignity and sobriety. When they picketed lines through which Southern citizens passed, they acted with courtesy at the same time that they did their duty. They captured Southern men without insulting them, and by their own self-respect won the respect of others."¹

Throughout the country the behavior of the black men under fire was watched with the most intense interest. More and more in the baptism of blood they justified the faith for which their friends had fought for years.

The Fifty-fourth Massachusetts, commanded by Robert Gould Shaw, was

1. Brawley, A Social History of the American Negro, P. 257.

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A common poster of the war represented a Negro soldier bearing the

flag, the tricolor of a rifle being broken, a young Negro boy waving

a newspaper, and several children peering into a window. Over all

were the words

"All slaves were made free by Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, January 1st, 1863. Come, then, white-headed colored men, to the nearest United States army, and fight for the Union and Liberty."

4. Abolition of Slavery and Negro Soldiers

"To the credit of the soldiers can be ascribed that in their new position they acted with dignity and courtesy. When they returned home through which Southern soldiers passed, they acted with courtesy to the same as if they had been free. They considered Southern men without feeling them, and by their own self-respect won the respect of others."

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good many justified the faith for which their friends had fought for

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The Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts, commanded by Robert Gould Shaw, was

1. Strategy, A Social History of the American Negro, p. 287.

conspicuous in the attempt to take Fort Wagner, on Morris Island near Charleston, July 18, 1863. It was on this occasion that Sergeant William H. Carney seized the regiment's colors from the hands of a falling comrade, planted the flag on the works, and said when borne bleeding and mangled from the field, "Boys, the old flag never touched the ground."

About seventy-five commissions were held by Negro officers during the war and among these Dr. John V. De Grasse of whom mention has already been made was "surgeon of the U. S. C. T., Thirty-fifth regiment."¹ "He was, says Woodson, "the first commissioned Negro surgeon in the United States Army."²

During the war the North as a whole had no special enthusiasm about the Negro and among both officers and men moreover there was great prejudice against the use of the Negro soldier, the feeling being that he was disqualified by slavery and ignorance. Privates objected to meeting black men on the same footing as themselves and if many men in the North felt thus, the South was furious at the thought of the Negro as a possible opponent in arms.

"Social psychologists," says Johnson, "have suggested that persons who are most in danger of losing status protest loudest. The securely wealthy as the securely cultured appear to be less disturbed by the advances of the Negro."³

To those courageous, cultured white officers, such as Shaw, however, who had no fear or doubt of the Negro in this new environment of equal rating and to the Negro, himself, whom opportunity had given the stimulus to achieve, no ordinary eulogy can apply. Their names are written in

1. Thomas O. Fuller, History of the American Negro, P. 52.

2. Carter G. Woodson, The Journal of Negro History, Vol. VIII.

3. Charles S. Johnson, The Negro in American Civilization, P. 361.

letters of flame and their deeds live after them. On the Shaw Monument in Boston are written these words:

The White Officers

Taking life and Honor in their Hands--Cast their lot
with Men of a Despised Race Unproved in War--and Risked
Death as Inciters of a Servile Insurrection if Taken
Prisoners, Besides Encountering all the Common Perils of
Camp, March, and Battle.

The Black Rank and File

Volunteered when Disaster Clouded the Union Cause--
Served without Pay for Eighteen Months till Given that
of White Troops--Faced Threatened Enslavement if Captured--
Were Brave in Action--Patient under Dangerous and Heavy
labors and Cheerful amid Hardships and Privations.

Together

They Gave to the Nation Undying Proof that Americans
of African Descent Possess the Pride, Courage, and
Devotion of the Patriot Soldier--One Hundred and Eighty
Thousand Such Americans Enlisted under the Union Flag
in MDCCCXIII-MDCCCXV.

C. The Receiving of Recognition

When all was over there was in Boston a spontaneous recognition of the right of such men to honorable and generous treatment at the hands of the nation, and in Congress there was the feeling that if the South could come back to the Union with its autonomy unimpaired, certainly the Negro soldier should have the rights of full citizenship.

"One of the most conclusive proofs," says Roman, "that the changes that have been made in the Negro's status have been generally in the direction of true progress, is that wherever and whenever these changes have been complete and operative, opposition to them has disappeared and they have dropped out of the main problem."¹

1. C. V. Roman, American Civilization and the Negro, P. 291.

3. General Awakening of the Negro

The Negroes themselves had, in the course of the struggle, and, in fact, as its collateral result, experienced a deep and general awakening.

"Adverse criticism," says Washington, "has driven them to think deeper than they otherwise would about the problems which confront them as a race. The effect has been to give them, in short, that sort of race pride and race consciousness which, it seems to me, they need to bring out and develop the best that is in them."¹

This new impulse had taken on greater strength in Boston than it had anywhere else. It had manifested itself in a degree of individual and collective social progress much greater than would otherwise have taken place and proved that when given equal opportunity the Negro could achieve on an equal basis with the whites. It manifested itself, still more directly, in efforts to obtain larger opportunities and a position of increased respect in the community. "The Negro had learned that racial self-sufficiency is the road to racial peace and prosperity.

² Especially is this true, socially." Exceptional men and women of the race had forced their way upward to places unheard of before. These attainments by individuals were but the most conspicuous points, moreover, in a notable advance, along all lines, by the Negro population as a whole. Above the level of menial and common labor, a sufficient number of skilled mechanics to form the nucleus of a middle industrial class had obtained a foothold. Ownership of homestead property had increased from ³ almost zero to a substantial total. The Negro churches had multiplied from one to five, and half a dozen new lodges and beneficial societies

1. Booker T. Washington, The Story of the Negro, pp. 12, 15.

2. C. V. Roman, American Civilization and the Negro, p. 296.

3. Estimated in 1865 at \$200,000.

had been established.

Evidence of the Negro's budding pride in their part in the nation's history had appeared in a petition submitted by them, which requested the erection of a memorial to Crispus Attucks, the hero of the Boston
1
Massacre.

J. H. Oldham says, "Whatever form racial differentiation and social separation may take they must at least provide access for the Negroes who are qualified to take advantage of the opportunity to the learning and culture of the city, or an injustice will be done, as great as it is possible for one race to inflict on another; for it will mean the denial of the opportunity to grow."²

Thus an aroused purpose arose on the part of the Negro to seek the equal right to have full advantage of the community's cultural opportunities. This was signified by the formation of a library association which served successfully the double function of encouraging the members of this race to take up reading and study for self-improvement, while at the same time gradually paving the way for their use of the Public Library, and their attendance at lectures and entertainments, with immunity from openly contemptuous treatment on the part of the whites. The point at which the Negroes had shown their new spirit most directly and plainly, however, was in a complete change of attitude on the school question. In earlier years, it will be recalled, they had, themselves, besought, and finally prevailed upon the city to establish separate schools, on the ground that their children were ridiculed and abused by the white children. But early in the abolitionist campaign, they had begun to petition the municipal and state authorities to do away with

1. Attucks was an escaped slave, who had run away from his master, a resident of Framingham, Mass., in Sept. 1750.

2. J. H. Oldham, Christianity and the Race Problem, P. 174.

those separate school, on the ground that such segregation constituted objectionable and unfair discrimination. So persistently had they pressed their demand that in 1855 they had succeeded in obtaining the passage of a state law, forbidding thenceforth any distinction on account of race or color with respect to school attendance. That victory was the cause of great rejoicing.

4. The Campaign to Secure Equal Rights

The Boston Negro, with the encouragement and support of his white friends, now entered upon a campaign to secure this full measure of equal rights. Although he had been free since the days of the nation's birth and had, for many years, possessed of the ballot, stood on the same political plane as other members of the community, he now aspired to equal civil rights as well.

As a result of the abolitionist propaganda and the other favorable influences, Boston's Negro citizens were free in general to come and go in the community as they chose, so far as availing themselves of public privileges was concerned. In certain respects, however, they were still subject to objectionable discrimination. This appeared principally in the refusal of some of the hotels, restaurants, theatres, and other places of recreation or amusement, to serve or admit Negroes.

A. Adoption of Act Forbidding Discrimination, 1865.

Immediately after the war, the Negro leaders petitioned for a law which should render illegal any denial to their race of privileges commonly accorded to all other citizens. The result was the adoption by the Legislature, in 1865, of an act forbidding discrimination, on account of

those separate schools, on the ground that such segregation constituted
 objectionable and unfair discrimination. So persistently had they
 pressed their demand that in 1855 they had succeeded in obtaining the
 passage of a state law, forbidding teachers any distinction on account
 of race or color with respect to school attendance. That victory was the
 cause of great rejoicing.

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color or race, in licensed inns, public places of amusement, public conveyances, or public meetings, under penalty of a fine not to exceed fifty¹ dollars. The following year another law was passed, specifying further that it should be unlawful to "exclude persons from, or restrict them in"² any such places "except for good cause."

B. Cases Involving Civil Rights, 1866

In October, 1866, was tried the only case involving the civil rights of the Negro which has ever reached the Supreme Court of the state. A certain Negro had been refused the privilege of playing billiards in a public billiard room kept by a white man. The ruling of the court was, that as the prohibitory statutes applied only to licensed places, and as the billiard room in question was not licensed, no offense had been com-³mitted in law. Before long another complaint was brought up. A well-known Negro had been put out of a public skating-rink. The case was tried by two talented Negro lawyers, Archibald H. Grimke and Butler R. Wilson, both of whom were leaders in the equal rights agitation. It was won in the municipal court, but was dismissed in the superior court.

C. Extension of Act Forbidding Discrimination, 1884

These adverse decisions finally led to a further extension of the provisions of the law in 1884. The broadening phrase, "licensed or unlicensed," was inserted, skating-rinks were included by name among the places in which any discrimination was forbidden, and the maximum fine⁴ was increased to one hundred dollars.

1. Acts and Resolves, 1865, Chap. 277.
2. Acts and Resolves, 1866, Chap. 252.
3. Commonwealth V. David Sylvester
4. Acts and Resolves, 1885, Chap. 316.

D. Case Resulting in further extension of Act 1893

1

In 1893, William H. Lewis, a young Negro then attending Harvard University Law School, and an ardent recruit to the ranks of the agitators for equality, was refused service in a barber-shop in Cambridge. He and Wilson went before the Legislature and asked that not only barber-shops, but all places open for public patronage, be included in the scope of the law. The Act of 1885 was in consequence amended, and made to include barber shops or other public places kept for hire, gain, or reward, whether licensed or not." ² The law was revised two years later and increased the maximum fine to three hundred dollars, made imprisonment of not more than one year an alternative or additional penalty, and provided also for the recovery of damages, of not less than twenty-five nor more than three hundred dollars, by the person subjected to discrimination. ³

E. Securing of Full Equal Rights, 1895

By 1895, therefore, the Negro's civil rights--that is, his share in all public privileges of whatever sort--had been made fully equal, in Boston and Massachusetts, to those of other elements of the community. So far as it was possible for the law to accomplish, all obstacles to the Negro's largest opportunity were removed, and he was placed abreast of his white fellow-citizens.

5. The Negro as Public Office Holder

During the years in which civil rights were being won, the Negroes

1. Lewis, later in 1907, was made Assistant U. S. District Attorney in Boston. In 1911, he was appointed an Assistant U. S. Attorney-General at Washington.
2. Acts and Resolves, 1893, Chap. 436.
3. Acts and Resolves, 1895, P. 519.

were at the same time enjoying a high degree of favor in the form of public offices. The sentiment which had been aroused for the Negroes began to manifest itself in the bestowment upon him of public position, both appointive and elective.

This impulse found expression chiefly through the medium of the Republican party, which represented the great majority of the North, and which was now fully established in power. The Negroes, on their side, realizing their indebtedness to that party for their rights of citizenship and the franchise, followed its banner with an almost religious devotion. But the friendliness toward the emancipated race was too general to be entirely confined in its political aspects to the Republican ranks. The Northern wing of the Democracy also was well disposed, and inclined toward an attitude of invitation and promise.

The Federal Administration took the lead in extending patronage to representatives of Boston's Negro inhabitants. The state followed immediately. In the city government, where even at that early date sentiment was held more closely in check by considerations of a more practical character, such recognition came less quickly, and was due in some measure to the claims which the Negroes themselves advanced. At first, a majority of the recipients of political favors were veterans of the anti-slavery struggle and the war. It is worthy of note, also, that most of them were from the class which had previously been referred to as "free persons of color." This, evidently was to keep Southern Negroes who had migrated to Boston since the war from holding public office.

The Negro's sudden elevation to state honors was indeed striking.

were at the same time enjoying a high degree of favor in the eyes of the public officials. The sentiment which had been aroused for the Negroes began to manifest itself in the movement upon the part of public opinion, both associative and effective.

This opinion found expression mainly through the medium of the Republican party, which represented the great majority of the North, and which was now fully established in power. The Negroes, on their side, realizing their indebtedness to that party for their rights of citizenship and the franchise, followed its banner with an almost religious devotion. The two friendships toward the emancipated race were too general as to be entirely confined in the political aspects to the Republican ranks. The Southern wing of the Democratic also was well disposed, and inclined toward an attitude of tolerance and promise.

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The Negro's widest extension to state honors was indeed striking.

A. Negroes as Representatives in Legislature, 1866

In 1866, Boston elected two Negro members to the House of Representatives of the Legislature. These men thereby won the distinction in history of being the first of their race to sit in the legislature of any state in the Union.

B. Appointment of Judgeship, 1883

Of state appointive positions given to Negroes the most notable was that of judge of the city court for the Charlestown district, which, in 1883, Governor Benjamin F. Butler, a Democrat, conferred upon George L. Ruffin. The latter was the first of the race to serve on the bench in
1
the North.

C. Representation in Municipal Affairs, 1885

In city politics, as had been remarked, the recognition which the Negroes received was due in part to their own solicitations. So rapidly did they increase in number in the West End colony, that by 1885 they constituted more than half the Republican voters in old Ward 9, which was of a strongly Republican cast. They were, therefore, able to put forward, and if necessary to enforce, a strong claim to representation in municipal affairs.

Though none of the Negro officeholders made what would be called a brilliant record, none, on the other hand, acted a discreditable part. All rendered at least ordinary, honest service. Though several were able to be of special use to their own people, that phase of their accountability was subordinate in importance to their trusteeship in behalf of
1. Ruffin retained his position till his death in 1886.

the community at large. Most pertinent of all, however, was the fact that the elevation of these members of the race to public office made the Negroes feel that they had a part of some consequence in the affairs of the community, and at the same time caused the community to form a higher opinion of them.

Altogether, these were for the Negroes years of rejoicing in their newly attained privileges, and of efflorescence in the first warm sunshine of their freedom. Before the law of the nation they were raised to a place of political peerage with the white man. In the law of the state of Massachusetts they were endowed also with full civil equality. They were elevated to office and seated beside their white fellow-citizens in many positions of trust and esteem. On the side of the other race, popular sentiment with reference to the emancipated people was generous to the degree of indulgence. The fact of being a Negro actually counted as an element of advantage as signifying a special claim upon the community and elicited special sympathy and help. Such was the spirit of the period. The granting of equal rights to the Negro and the bestowal of public favor upon him were its dominant features.

6. Political, Religious, and Economic Progress

A. Political Progress

"If a democracy is to be effective and facile in its operation there must be an equality of legal restriction upon individual acts. Furthermore, if there is restriction of legal rights it must be certain that it is for the mutual welfare of all individuals. No man shall be prevented from doing what another under the same circumstances is permitted to do; no man should be punished for an act unless all other men are punished in kind and degree for the same act. With inequality, disintegrating forces are straightway set at work to destroy the organic relationship between man and man, which is requisite for a democracy's existence. If there is

inequality of rights each individual ceases to be a personality having ends which all others are bound to respect, and becomes degraded to the position of mere means to some one else's ends."¹

Frederick Douglass in an interview with President Andrew Johnson in 1866 said,

"Your noble and humane predecessor placed in our hands the sword to assist in saving the nation and we do hope that you, his able successor, will favorably regard the placing in our hands, the unrestricted use of the ballot with which to save ourselves."

In the right which the Negro has of the ballot and the use to which he puts this right is to be found the most immediate and specific test of his interest in the community at large, and of the character and tendency of his own contribution thereto.

Before the war the Negro's participation in political affairs went no further than voting or petitioning.

Through the conventions and committees of Abolition days the Boston Negroes gained considerable experience in methods akin to those of politics, which subsequently gave them greater confidence in advancing their claims. After the war they, of course, expected to be of more political consequence. Whatever effort they exerted on their own behalf was of secondary importance and effect, for they were immediately made the protégés of white friends and enthusiasts, at whose hands they forthwith became recipients of bountiful patronage.

Not until 1885 did the Boston Negroes, themselves, reach the point where, by virtue of increase in numbers in the West End, were they in a position effectually to demand representation. Though thereafter their

1. J. O. Hertzler, Social Progress, PP. 380, 381.

numbers constituted the most apparent reason for their political prosperity, the continued though diminishing favor of the whites was its underlying cause. Thus it is from the year 1885 and not before that the political record of the Negro, on his own feet and in his own right, really dates.

"The Negro," says Brawley, "had an inborn predilection for politics. Its boundless opportunity for talking and speech-making gratified his volubility and provided an outlet which vied with the religious for his emotional eloquence. Its air of consequence inflated him and was to some extent a solace for his humiliated position in the community. Its numberless conferences, committees, and conventions, appealed to his sociable instincts. This quality of sociability, moreover, combined with the Negro's disposition toward lasting forms of association, afforded a good basis for political development."¹

One of the most striking and important elements in the Negro's political advance was the growth of a self-reliant attitude as a racial group.

Another important factor in their political progress was that the great majority of Negro voters of the period were better educated, more intelligent regarding political matters, and more sensitive to the higher standards of political honesty, and more interested in and disposed to uphold the principles of good government, than was the case in years past. The Negro's asset value as a citizen and as a political unit had now, in short, been much enhanced. At the same time, the Negroes had made good strides forward from the point of view of their own more or less distinct interests. In their mere quantitative increase, with which their political strength must of necessity be roughly commensurate, they had become possessed of a solid substructure upon which they could build. Growing numbers had been accompanied by fuller understanding of their own interests, and wider experience in the political field. On this

1. Benj. Brawley, A Social History of the American Negro, P. 271.

triple basis, the promising beginning of organization and leadership, adapted to the situation had been reared. As contrasted with their former political dependence on the whites, and their rather slavish following of the Republican party, the Negroes were at this period drawing together among themselves as a self-reliant racial group, and had already in considerable measure brought their independent political leverage to bear in the protection and advancement of their own collective welfare. As the combined result of their progress in these several respects, they had succeeded in making themselves a reckonable factor in the body politic, and in obtaining substantial political recognition in the form of an increasing number of appointments to public positions of trust and credit.

B. Religious Progress

Religion is one of the means discovered by man for living better and more abundantly.

"Religion," according to Todd, "has served progress in five ways:-

1. By way of social discipline.
2. In the economic struggle for the satisfaction of life needs.
3. In cultivating the habit of speculation.
4. In fostering ideals, and particularly the positive ideal of altruism.
5. The expansion and enriching of human personality."

The church lives in the assembling of its members, in local units of fellowship. Hence for its members and others it is a social rallying-point, furnishing in many rural communities the chief occasion for the regular meeting of the folk. "Under such conditions the church is less a specific association than a communal institution," says Mac Iver. "It is the focus for the celebration and symbolization of the great occasions and

1. A. J. Todd, Theories of Social Progress, PP. 418-428.

crises of life, a cultural center of the life of the community." ¹ It conducts and controls many social activities, political, educational, charitable, recreational.

During this period a Negro minister said, "Take their churches away from the Negro people and you pull down the mainstay of their social order."

The Negroes in Boston attended white churches for a long time before they had any of their own. In the earliest days, while slavery was still in existence, they were restricted to a gallery.

"No matter how old, decrepid, or deaf, a man or woman may be, if he has a dark skin and a woolly head, he must hobble up gallery, and seat himself in the Negro's corner, though peradventure, he may be unable there to unite with any of the exercises of public worship. Even in this city, where is the 'Cradle of Liberty', where was the centre of Puritan influence, the colored disciple may be seen coming up alone to the altar, to partake of the crumbs left by his more favored brethren; or seated in the broad aisle, receiving the cup last of all, lest he should violate the laws of caste, and pollute the Christian temple." ²

After slavery died out these restrictions also passed away, and the Negroes sat among the whites, generally as servants in the family pews, but to some extent, particularly in the case of those following independent callings on a basis of equality. ³

"The Church," says King, "has often found it convenient to stress charity rather than brotherhood, justice, or freedom, particularly in its approach to social conditions and race relations. Much Negro education and many Negro welfare movements owe their origin and support to the Church, but the color line is still drawn in the Church itself." ⁴

After one hundred and sixty-eight years of attendance in white churches with their color restrictions, the first independent Negro church was founded. Since that time, the great majority of this element

1. R. M. Mac Iver, Society: Its Structure and Changes, P. 242.
2. Isaac Knapp, The Negro Pew, PP. 83, 84.
3. Phillis Wheatley, for instance, was a member of the Old South Meeting House.
4. W. P. King, Social Progress & Christian Ideals, P. 108.

of the population, partly of their own accord and partly because of the prevailing attitude of the other race, have gone to these separate churches of their own.

Nevertheless, a considerable minority, for one of several reasons, or a combination of them all, attend white churches instead. Among these, the group which stands out with chief distinctness is composed of some of the most uncompromising of those members of the race who insist on the importance of equal privilege, and who profess to be opposed to all racial segregation. This group has its historical origin in the Abolitionist propaganda. Garrison himself advised the Negroes against forming separate churches, and Frederick Douglass exhorted his people to intermingle with the other race in religious activity.

That there is a distinct and well-grounded movement among the Negroes toward a deeper realization of the central and vital importance of the Negro church, not only in its religious but also in its social and ethical value, is the fact which holds out fullest promise for the future. During this period the number of Negro Churches grew from five to twenty-five.

The independent Negro church is the natural and logical medium of religious expression for the Negro people, and the Negroes are in fact rallying around their church. As yet this movement is most clearly observed among the sturdy rank and file, as should and indeed must be the case if the church is to get its essential grip on the mass of the race. At the same time it is also true that, to a very appreciable extent, the middle and upper classes are either being aroused from hitherto complete

indifference to religious forces, and brought into active connection with the churches of their own people; or, in the case of others, converted from their previous futile efforts to gain standing in white churches. The Negroes of these higher graduations in the economic-social scale are bringing to the service of the Negro church not only the increased material means and some degree of the practical business experience which are almost indispensable factors in its progress, but also superior education and refinement, and generally more advanced standards. They are the element who should be the natural church leaders, and they are now in fact entering upon the exercise of such leadership. They are helping to put the churches on a sounder financial basis, are strengthening their moral tone, and gradually are building up a more efficient religious organization.

When, then, full account is taken of these innate elements of strength and this underlying progress, it is evident that the Boston Negroes are, indeed, applying their religious resources in more practical ways and to better purpose. Furthermore, a fundamental tendency toward religious coherence and solidarity, in and about the Negro church, is clearly manifest among them. The Negro community at this period in their progress is, in short, bringing religion more effectually to bear in the betterment of its conditions and in the solution of its problems.

C. Economic Progress

"The products of economic effort," says Hertzler, "are the very basis of social progress, for progress comes by the multiplication of achievement, and achievement along all lines--physical, political, moral, spiritual, artistic--depends upon substantial and appropriate economic foundations."¹

1. Hertzler, Social Progress, P. 403.

In the absence of an economic surplus, no strong social order can be built up, nor can the social amenities and ameliorations be cultivated in any substantial measure, for neither the necessary respite from incessant toil nor the requisite material means will be present. Under such circumstances, also, the bitterness of the struggle for economic self-preservation would prevent the rise of altruistic ethical standards and ideals.

Gardner says, "A change in economic conditions reacts upon the whole mental and moral life and effects a profound transformation of all human¹ ideals."

With respect to religion, each individual's most essential altar may be contained solely within himself, nevertheless, collective religious activity, if it is to have practical effect, must needs be materially supported. On the political side, finally, any element of the population, which is compelled to expend its entire energy in the dire necessity of maintaining life, is hardly in a position either to acquire an adequate understanding of political affairs or to use the ballot and its accompanying privileges to intelligent and advantageous purpose. In the last analysis, therefor, the Negro's progress at every point must hinge upon his economic well-being, and as he cannot move forward in other directions except upon a sound economic basis, so, conversely, it follows that with such a foundation he stands in the way of advancing all along the line.

At this period in our study the mass of the Negroes are on an economic plane so low that the struggle for livelihood must be kept up

1. Charles S. Gardner, The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress, P. 189.

incessantly.

Dowd says, "In all their occupations the Negroes have lost ground, for three chief reasons: First, the Negro population has not been large enough to supply the increasing demand for labor, and the shortage has had to be made up from white immigrants; second, the rise in the standard of living of the whites has called for an increased efficiency in service and the Negro has not qualified himself; third, there have developed white trade-unions which excluded the Negroes from membership."¹

"Having reference to Boston," Archibald H. Grimke says, 'The colored coachman got a black eye when people began to travel abroad, and to discover in England, for instance, how much more an English coachman knows about horses and their care than a coloured one in Boston!'"²

The employment of Negroes in industry has in nearly all cases been because white laborers were not available. Their adaptability to skilled labor has not been demonstrated and in processes demanding highly skilled work they have not been employed. And in work that assumes the mastery of a trade, painting, carpentry, bricklaying, and the like, they are seldom considered if other labor is available. Rightly or wrongly, there has been a general belief that they are not fitted to perform technical tasks of other than a routine nature. The reputation that the race has had for shiftlessness and undependability has militated against the employment of individuals in positions of responsibility. When individuals have been given a trial at skilled labor the results have sometimes been surprising to employers. That fact remains, however, that many employers who have used Negro labor in manufacturing industries find them less satisfactory than white laborers. Reports from non-manufacturing industries are much more favorable to the Negroes. The difference lies probably in the fact of greater experience in non-manufacturing types of pursuits. If the Negroes are to gain and hold a place in industry they

1. Jerome Dowd, The Negro in American Life, P. 17.
2. Alfred Stone, Studies in the American Race Problem, P. 167.

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must do so by measuring up to prevailing labor standards, or above them. Sentiment and inertia may help or hinder the rapidity of their advance but in the end their success will depend upon their ability to meet competition.

A number of facts for which the Negroes themselves are in no way responsible have operated severely to limit their occupational field and virtually to exclude them from many occupations. They are seldom employed for positions that entail authority over white workers, and the popular prejudice against them in certain relations often prevents the advancement of competent men. Promotion would sometimes raise unpleasant social questions. In other cases to advance a competent Negro worker and allow him to occupy a position in which he would be the superior of white workers would antagonize the latter and thus tend to reduce the efficiency of the plant. A similar thing is true in regard to work that implies association on an equal footing with white employees: Negroes are rarely employed or advanced to such positions. If the nature of the work is such that the employees must meet customers in any capacity other than that of menial, the Negro has no chance of employment. Only white people are employed as sales people, conductors, motormen on street cars, solicitors, and the like when white people are customers. The employer in such cases is merely making a business adjustment to the racial attitudes of the public his business serves.

The three parties to the industrial prejudices against the Negro are thus seen to be employers, white employees, and the public. But wherever the immediate responsibility may rest, it is, of course, in every case

the employers who are ultimately and in the most tangible way accountable.

When now one turns from the negative to the positive aspects of this situation, and seeks to find whether the problem which has been pointed out is in process of solution, by any distinct economic advance on the Negro's part, what are the facts which here align themselves?

The advance which has subsequently come about is shown by the fact that at this period in our study approximately thirty-five per cent, or more than a third of the city's Negro inhabitants, are found to be in occupations above the lowest or menial plane, and mostly in those belonging to the intermediate gradation.¹ Thus it becomes evident that a great improvement has taken place; and one which, moreover, does not have to do only with a small minority composed of exceptional individuals, but with a very large proportion of the entire Negro population.

In 1890, the proportion of Negro males in Boston proper engaged in occupations above those of servants, waiters, porters, helpers, and non-descript laborers was 43 per cent, and the proportion of Negro females in occupations above the grade of servants and laundresses was 21 per cent. In 1900 the corresponding proportions were 40 per cent and 25 per cent. In the case of men there had been only a slight decline of 3 per cent,² and in the case of women there had been a net gain of 4 per cent.

Viewed in the light of the foregoing analysis of the situation, these figures show that in the course of the decade the Negroes made enough headway in moving up the industrial scale to offset fully the depressing effect of the flood of raw immigrants from the south. The actual advance which was accomplished stands out still more clearly when expressed in

1. Census Reports, 1890, 1900.

2. Ibid.

the employers who are ultimately in the most favorable way accountable. When now we turn from the negative to the positive aspects of this situation, and ask whether the problem which has been pointed out is in process of solution, by any distinct economic advance on the Negro's part, what are the facts which bear upon themselves?

The advance which was consequently made about as shown by the fact that at this period in our study approximately thirty-five per cent, or more than a third of the city's Negro inhabitants, are found to be in occupations above the lowest or menial plane, and nearly as many in those belonging to the intermediate position. This is a considerable advance, but a great improvement has taken place; and one which, moreover, does not seem to be only with a small minority composed of exceptional individuals, but with a very large proportion of the entire Negro population.

In 1880, the proportion of Negro males in certain proper engaged in occupations above those of servants, waiters, porters, helpers, and non-descript laborers was 45 per cent, and the proportion of Negro females in occupations above the grade of servants and laundresses was 31 per cent. In 1900 the corresponding proportions were 50 per cent and 35 per cent. In the case of men there had been only a slight decline of 5 per cent, and in the case of women there had been a loss of 4 per cent. Viewed in the light of the foregoing analysis of the situation, these figures show that in the course of the decade the Negroes made enough headway in moving up the industrial scale to offset fully the depressing effect of the flood of new immigrants from the south. The actual advance which was accomplished stands out still more clearly when expressed in

terms of numbers instead of percentages. Whereas, in 1890, the number of Negroes of both sexes in occupations above the level of those cited as the lowest was 1674, in 1900 it was 2326, an increase of 652.¹ This evidence of the Negro's economic progress is made clearer when one considers the variety of occupations in which he is now found. In the census of 1900 not only were substantial numbers of Negroes listed in each of the five general industrial classifications, - agriculture, the professions, domestic and personal service, trade and transportation, manufacturing and mechanical pursuits, - but also, in the case of the 123 secondary classifications into which the entire working male population of Boston was distributed, Negroes were reported in 96; while of the 57 similar classifications for women, members of this race were reported in 34.

Evidence to the improvement in the Negro's economic conditions is found in the fact that he is constantly increasing in numbers and proportion in the ranks of those manual and clerical occupations which constitute the broad middle group of industry. In this intermediate field, which is of the greatest strategic importance to the rank and file of his people, the Negro is constantly becoming more strongly established. At the top also, in the sphere of the professions and business proprietorship, a substantial and continually growing number are found; and here the qualities of initiative independence, and responsibility are most fully developed, as vital assets for the future economic advance of the whole Negro community.

1. Census Reports, 1890-1900.

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CHAPTER VI

Reactionary Forces Resulting in Philosophy of Self-Reliance

1. Resistance to Progress

"Progress meets always with resistance and obstacles of all kinds," says Hertzler. "The bulk of the human race has ever fought its own advancement. Its great forward movements have always been resisted not only by the reactionaries but by the entire multitude. This resistance to change is an obstacle which only social education and change of social attitude will remove."¹

Progress is likely to be always a matter of struggle. The forces that make for progress always have to compete with the forces that make for standstill and regress. The reactionary always has to be overcome not by spasmodic efforts, but by disciplined persistence illuminated by right ideals.

"Because of reactionary forces progress is the greatest challenge as well as the greatest human art of the age."²

2. Rise and Result of Reactionary Forces

"The United States after fighting a Civil War acquired an effective social conscience on the issue of the Negro," says Hart. "The right of Negroes to hold property, their access to certain occupations and professions, their opportunities for education, their participation in government and their right to rise in the world in proportion to their abilities, are still hampered arbitrarily on the basis of the old out-group badge of skin, color, and racial features."³

Boston reaction toward the Negro arose as a result of the wretched exhibition which the ignorant, helpless, and economically exploited

1. Joyce O. Hertzler, Social Progress, PP. 110, 112.

2. Ibid, P. 73.

3. Hornell Hart, The Technique of Social Progress, P. 417.

Negro gave in the South, during the period of Reconstruction, which was too brief and weak to work any thoroughgoing change in the institutional life of the race.

A. Reconstruction Period

The effect of Reconstruction experience upon the North was decidedly to dampen the sentiment for the Boston Negro which there prevailed. That element of the population, probably greatly in the majority, which had from the first been more or less dubious regarding the bestowal of equal rights upon the Negroes, pointed in justification of their misgivings to the poor showing the Negro was making in the South. People who had expected that the Negroes would become good citizens immediately the rights of citizenship were accorded them, were forced to qualify their views. Some, so deep was their disappointment and disillusionment, completely abandoned their former faith, and joined the ranks of those who were at least skeptical regarding the Negro's capacity for progress.

B. Southern Propaganda

Another influence now entered in to give the situation a further turn in the same reversed direction. Through the medium of an apparently half-spontaneous, half-deliberate, but at any rate very skillful campaign of public addresses, books, newspapers, and magazine writing, the South began to urge its own view of the Negro problem upon Boston and to solicit sympathy and support. Because sentiment for the Negro had mounted higher in Boston than anywhere else, the subsidence which was now taking place was, by contrast, most marked in that city.

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END
PAPER

C. Influx of Southern Negroes

The sudden and constantly increasing influx of Negro immigrants from the South, into Boston, further complicated the problem. They came in large numbers. Most of them were utterly uneducated and ignorant. These new arrivals became a common sight in the streets. They crowded into the cars, among the white passengers. They entered restaurants and took seats alongside the white patrons. They even invaded some of the most select Back Bay churches. Never before had Boston experienced the Southern Negro en masse. Its previous acquaintance had been chiefly with the Northern free persons of color, a highly refined type in comparison. In the face of these Negroes, who came pouring in after the war, the white inhabitants of Boston involuntarily and at first unwillingly recoiled. Gradually, this recoil hardened into permanent withdrawal.

D. Reaction in Boston's Attitude

The combined result, therefore, of the several influences which have been cited was to effect a pronounced reaction in Boston's attitude toward the Negro. Though during its formative period this reaction developed as an under-current, it made itself more and more distinctly felt, as time went by, and constantly rose nearer to the surface. This change of view was in fact an approximation to the attitude held by the South.

"The very essence of race prejudice, or culture group antagonism," says Hart, "is that the individuals identified with the hated group are not accepted on their merits, but are at once regarded with all of the antagonism which has been built up against the group as a whole, or against its least desirable members. It is a special case of linkage. Persons who despise Negroes have linked up in their minds the concept 'Negro' with a whole group of undesirable characteristics--laziness, immorality, disease, criminality, ignorance, mental inferiority, and the like. Negroes as a class tend to be put into this person's anti-personality. Any individual Negro, then, even if he have a Ph. D. degree, or

C. Index of Southern Negroes

The index and especially increasing index of Negro immigrants from the South, into Boston, further complicated the problem. They came in large numbers, most of them were utterly uneducated and ignorant. These new arrivals became a constant sight in the streets. They crowded into the cars, among the white passengers. They entered restaurants and hotels, and alongside the white people. They even invaded some of the most select clubs and Bay View. Never before had Boston experienced the Southern Negro on a mass scale. The previous immigration had been entirely with the Northern type of Negro, a slightly different type in color, in the face of these Negroes, who were coming in after the war, the white inhabitants of Boston involuntarily and at first unwillingly received. Gradually, this racial barrier broke down and with it.

D. Reaction in Boston's attitude

The combined result, therefore, of the several influences which have been stated was to create a pronounced reaction in Boston's attitude toward the Negro. During the formative period this reaction developed as an under-current, it made itself more and more distinctly felt, as time went by, and eventually rose nearer to the surface. This change of view was in fact an approximation to the attitude held by the South. "The very essence of race prejudice, or at least group antagonism," says Mr. T. "is that the individual is identified with the group and not accepted as an individual, and he is treated with all of the antagonism which his race affords him. It is a special case of this, against the individual himself. It is a special case of this. Persons who despise Negroes have looked at in their eyes the same as the 'Negro' with a whole group of undesirable characteristics--darkness, coarseness, laziness, criminality, immorality, mental inferiority, and the like. Negroes as a class tend to be this and this is the anti-reaction. Any individual Negro, then, even if he have a Ph. D. degree, or

is the president of a bank, or is a distinguished musician, is likely to incur the aversion built up for Negroes as a group."1

3. Beginning of Defensive Negro Action

When, with the ~~failure~~ of Reconstruction, the Negroes realized that their rights under the constitution were not to be maintained in the South, and when, later on, they saw also that the tide of sentiment was beginning to ebb in the North, the great mass of the race simply accepted and reconciled themselves to these reversals as to irrevocable matters of fact. But a certain element, consisting chiefly of the more highly educated Negroes, and of those who through long Northern residence had become saturated with Abolition doctrine, entered upon a movement of protest and agitation. This was, so to speak, a resumption of the earlier campaign for the passage of the Amendments and the Civil Rights Laws but it was a resumption on the defensive.

"It is but human experience," says Du Bois, "to find that the complete suppression of a race is impossible. Despite inner discouragement and submission to the oppression of others there persisted the mighty spirit, the emotional rebound that kept a vast number struggling for its rights, for self-expression, and for social uplift."2

As Boston had been the scene of the Negro's greatest activity in the anti-slavery struggle and the demand for equality, so now it became the principal center of his resistance to the current that was setting in against him.

Two of the earliest organizations formed to voice protest were the Wendell Phillips Club, started in 1876, and the Colored National League, formed about the same time and maintained during the years that the pendulum had swung fully backward, coming to a close in 1900. In 1899,

1. Hornell Hart, The Science of Social Relations, P. 563
2. W. E. B. Du Bois, Black Reconstruction, P. 702.

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"It is not human experience," says the poet, "to find that the con-
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Two of the earliest organizations formed to resist protest were the
Wendell Phillips Club, started in 1846, and the Colored National League,
formed about the same time and disbanded during the years that the
Confederacy had swung fully toward, coming to a close in 1865. In 1892,

the latter association sent to President McKinley an open letter, which began thus:

"We the colored people of Massachusetts, in mass meeting assembled, to consider our oppressions and the state of the country relative to the same;"

and after reciting various grievances, went on to demand, "the enjoyment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness equally with other men."

4. Result of the Change in Attitude

The change of attitude toward the Boston Negroes during the period awakened them to the fact that dependence solely or mainly upon the bestowment of rights and privileges could not but prove in the very nature of things a far from sufficient foundation upon which to build any competent and independent future.

"However, important," says Daniels, "such legislative protection and assistance from without may be still more essential is it that the Negro should elicit and develop, from within, any potentialities and abilities which he himself possesses."¹

"The first essential," says Weatherford, "is that the members of the race shall be like-minded, shall come to realize their consciousness of like desires and needs--in other words, shall come into a realization of kind. This means the growth of race consciousness. It means that men shall come to see that they belong to a common race, have a common heritage and a common future. This race consciousness growing into race pride becomes the most powerful factor in welding together, into cooperative and constructive action, all those who belong to the race."²

This like-mindedness and consciousness of kind is important in social progress for, as Ellwood says, in so many words--social progress means more harmonious coordinations among the members of a group,--greater efficiency of the group in carrying on its common life, greater capacity for and

1. John Daniels, In Freedom's Birthplace, PP. 414, 415.

2. W. D. Weatherford, Present Forces in Negro Progress, P. 36

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2. Results of the League in America

The change of attitude toward the Boston League during the period

extended from the fact that dependence solely or mainly upon the

testimony of rights and privileges could not prove in the very nature

of things a far from sufficient foundation upon which to build any new

policy and independent justice.

"However, important," says Daniels, "was the fact that the League's assistance from without may be still more important in its own right. It could assist and develop, for within, very considerable and efficient action on its own part."

"The first essential," says Combs, "is that the members of the race shall be self-reliant, shall come to realize their responsibility of the duties and needs--in other words, shall come into a realization of their own power. The second essential is that the members of the race shall come to see that they belong to a common race, have a common heritage and a common future. This race consciousness, growing into race pride, is the third essential factor in building together, into common life and constructive action, all that are and belong to the race."

This self-reliance and consciousness of what is involved in social

progress for the colored race, in so many words--social and race means more harmonious co-operation among the members of a group--greater efficiency

of the group in carrying on its common life, greater capacity for and

1. John Daniels, in Frederick Douglass's Autobiography, pp. 114, 115.
2. F. D. Woodberry, Frederick Douglass in the League, p. 28.

greater development of cooperation, --hence greater capacity on the part of the group to survive. It includes all movements which make in the long run, for social harmony, social efficiency and social survival.¹

5. Philosophy of Self-Reliance for Future Social Progress

From this reactionary attitude came the conviction that, if the Boston Negro is to achieve real and lasting progress, he must be made to depend primarily, not upon the bestowal of favor from without, but upon his own independent effort from within. He, himself, has come to recognize that in the last analysis his continued social progress depends upon the cultivation of his own resources. The final and most decisive test of his abilities, however, is found not merely in his recognition of the necessity for self-effort, but in the actual extent to which he advances by means of his own powers.

That he has evolved from within himself this deep-reaching philosophy of self-reliance, is a fact which is pregnant with promise for the future. He has shown therein that he has a fundamental grasp of his own problem.

The Boston Negro, at the beginning of the twentieth century, ~~had~~ had the power consciously to retard or accelerate the process of his unfoldment; his progress was in his own hands. He had latent within him the principles of all powers and advancements, but for these to be made actual necessitated a conscious effort on his part. Thus, if he believes in social progress, he believes that he himself, by means of his intelligence, his adaptability, his power of self-control, and of control over

1. C. A. Ellwood, Sociology in Its Psychological Aspects, P. 368.

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Comprehensive Digest

In the study of the social progress of a people such as the Boston Negro, we come to see social progress in the light of more harmonious coordinations among the members of a group,--greater efficiency of the group in carrying on its common life, greater capacity for and greater development of cooperation,--hence greater capacity on the part of the group to survive. It includes all movements which make in the long run, for social harmony, social efficiency and social survival.

The first Negroes in the Boston Colony were held as slaves and in the transformation of their lot from slaves to free citizens they themselves have from first to last had a vital, if not when all is said a decisive, part.

Very little social progress was made during the early years of bonded servitude and it is not at all reasonable to suppose that much progress could be made along either moral or social lines during a period of enslavement.

The fundamental task to which the Negro addressed himself, following his emancipation, was that of earning his daily bread, providing himself with the common decencies and comforts, obtaining an education, and, in general, gradually bettering his conditions of life.

In his relationship with the white colonists, the Negro in Boston was looked upon from the very beginning as inferior and so treated.

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contempt and ill-usage was raised by the Negro himself, and ever since then it has kept recurring, a pathetic and monotonous refrain. "Some view our sable race with scornful eye," lamented Phillis Wheatley. A prayer for strength to bear up under the "troubles" and "daily insults" which the members of this race had to endure, was sent up by Prince Hall, sturdy Negro leader in the years of the nation's birth. "The most degraded, wretched, and abject set of beings that ever lived since the world began," was the woe-begone characterization of this people wrung from the heart of David Walker, Negro forerunner of the Abolition struggle. Attempts were made to drive the Negroes out of the city, by a law which classed them in with "rogues, vagabonds, common beggars, and other, disorderly, and lewd persons," while some years later, this attempt having failed to accomplish its purpose, serious alarm was expressed at "the increase of a species of population which threatens to become both injurious and burdensome." The whites did not like the Negro, they looked upon him as an objectionable element in the community, but they could not bring themselves to the point of open and avowed persecution due to the contradiction between principles and practice which from the beginning troubled the Puritan conscience.

In Boston, as in no other colony, the Negroes showed themselves equal to the emergencies that arose, and capable of appreciating the opportunities to strike for their own rights.

Social progress of any marked degree would naturally follow emancipation from slavery when there was freedom of action and movement, so as early as 1766 and from that time up to 1780 we find the Boston

Negroes forcing their way into courts created only for white men, suing for liberty and freedom, and winning their cause.

The Boston Negro's most direct means of safeguarding and promoting his well-being, so far as these ends can be accomplished through law and public action, is had in his possession of the ballot, with its accompanying privileges and powers.

The right to vote has apparently been possessed by the Negro in Boston ever since the test case of the Cuffes which arose in 1778; and, at any rate, has clearly been his since the adoption of the Body of Liberties of 1790. Prior to the Abolitionist agitation, the proportion of Negroes who exercised this right was practically negligible. That campaign of propaganda, however, maintained for over thirty years, awakened the majority of the Negroes to a realization of their citizenship. In the endeavor to put strong anti-slavery men in office they found a sufficient inducement to make their votes count. During the twenty year period following the Civil War, the outflowing-favor of the white race was the potent factor in the appointment of Negroes to many respectable posts and in their election to the City Council and the State Legislature. Not until about 1885 did they themselves reach the point where, by virtue of having become so numerous in the West End as to comprise over half the voters in the Republican majority of old Ward 9, they were in a position effectually to demand representation.

The religious life of the Boston Negro has had three avenues of expression. The first is through attendance at white churches. The

second is through missions established and supervised by whites, but set aside exclusively for Negroes. The third is through their own separate churches.

The establishment of the first Negro church in 1805 had a decisive influence on the Negro Colony. By providing the Negroes with the only good-sized gathering place of their own, the church naturally became their principal rallying-point, not only for religious purposes, but for whatever other object might bring them together. In this way it did much to promote their general group development.

That the economic progress of the Boston Negro is of fundamental import cannot be gainsaid. Next, at least, to the question of the mere physical survival of the race, certainly this one, which has to do with the obtaining of an independent livelihood, bears most vitally of all upon the welfare of the Negro people. Upon the Negro's capacity to earn his daily bread depends, in the long run, the very perpetuation of his racial stock; while unless his ability proves equal to providing somewhat more than enough to meet the minimum needs of bare subsistence, all hope for any real and permanent progress on his part, in other respects, must be abandoned.

In the beginning, the Negroes in Boston were slaves, and as such had no independent industrial status whatever. The abolition of slavery in 1780 marked the starting-point of the semi-independent economic history of this element of the population. The status of slave was succeeded, however, by that of traditional servant, which in the case of the great majority of the Negroes in the Boston community lasted

until after the general emancipation of the race. Then the full economic liberty and responsibility of the Negro began. Though even before that a few Negroes had entered the professions and become business proprietors in a small way, yet as between this handful at the top and the rank and file still engaged in menial labor at the bottom, the proportion who had made their way into the manual and clerical intermediate occupations remained slight for fifteen or twenty years following the war. From this period on a great improvement took place and the Negroes made enough headway in moving up the industrial scale to offset fully the depressing effect of the flood of raw immigrants from the South.

The antipathy on the part of the white citizens toward the Boston Negro due to the showing the Southern Negro made during the notorious Reconstruction period of misgovernment resulted in the rise of a philosophy of self-reliance within the Negro. If there was need that he should have developed this philosophy before, that need became imperative with the reaction and hardening of attitude toward him on the part of the other race. The tendency that arose was to show the Negro no more favor than his actual merits warranted; and to subject him, besides, to an adverse prejudice which discounted even such worth as he may actually have had. Under these conditions, either he must get ahead through his own exertions, or not at all.

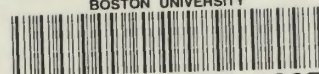
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